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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE EMERGENCE OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY CONCEPT IN ALBERTA

BY

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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

The central research question of the present study was to determine how Athabasca University was able to survive as an institution after the loss of its original mandate as a satellite university, and how it came to adopt an 'open' or 'distance learning' university model in what would appear to have been an unfavourable political, social, economic, and historical climate.

To address this question, Mayer Zald's 'political economy' model of organizational change was adopted. This led to an examination of the 'ideological' context of trends in higher education in North America, focusing on two basic theoretical issues: (1) the dominance of the 'human capital' model, and (2) the role of higher education in social mobility and social tracking, and the concern over equality of educational opportunity.

From a review of the literature, three basic models of the function of higher education were developed: (1) the traditional 'enlightenment' model, which views higher education as consumption and stresses the 'pursuit of knowledge for its own sake'; (2) the 'human capital' model, which views expenditures on higher education as investment in the nation's human resources; and (3) the 'manpower' model, which views higher education as a worthwhile investment only when it is tied specifically to the economy's manpower requirements.

An analysis of University Affairs was undertaken for the period 1959-1979, to produce a history of the major developments in Canadian

higher education. This was followed by a similar analysis of trends in higher education in Alberta, with special attention to the roles of the 'education elite', the Social Credit government (until 1971), and the Progressive Conservative Cabinet (after 1971).

An analysis of the emergence of Athabasca University was then undertaken, based on historical documentary research. A number of factors were identified as 'necessary but not sufficient' for Athabasca University's survival.

A review of the literature on the Open University of England was undertaken to describe the conditions under which that institution emerged, and to describe the original 'open university' model. The situation in England was found to have differed significantly from conditions which exsisted in Alberta during the emergence of Athabasca University. It was then demonstrated that the 'open university' model adopted by Athabasca University was also significantly different from that adopted in England.

The major finding of the thesis was that Athabasca University did not represent a dramatic departure from the mainstream of higher education practice in North America or the importation of a model from England. Rather, the open university model adopted by Athabasca University was the product of local developments, and compatible with the 'ideological' context of higher education in Alberta.

The emergence of Athabasca University was found to haye major significance for the models of higher education. As Athabasca University operated in a manner not fully explainable under the 'enlightenment', 'human capital', or 'manpower' models, a fourth model was required to describe its operation, and this was designated the 'consumerism' model.

Under the consumerism model, higher education is again viewed as consumption rather than investment, but differs from the enlightenment model in that higher education systems are mass rather than elite institutions.

Athabasca University's contribution to equality of educational opportunity was found to be ambiguous. Under the consumerism model, the issue of equality of educational opportunity is seen as irrelevant.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Athabasca University is Alberta's fourth and newest university. It originated with an Order-In-Council on June 25, 1970, which created an Interim Governing Authority to plan and build an undergraduate university restricted to arts, science, and education. It was to be located in St. Albert, a satellite community near Edmonton, and the original plans called for it to be operational by the fall of 1973 with 2,000 students. Its mandate specified that it was to be innovative in curriculum design, and the Interim Governing Authority produced an academic model which incorporated many of the most recent advances in higher education.

Following a change in the provincial government on August 30, 1971, Athabasca University's future became uncertain. Physical planning related to the St. Albert site was suspended by the new government on November 1, 1971, though academic planning was permitted to continue. On May 30, 1972, Athabasca University was reduced to the status of a "pilot project", a four or five year study involving 250 students at most, to evaluate the academic model developed by the Interim Governing Authority.

By November 1975, Athabasca University had again been approved in principle as a permanent baccalaureate level university, but this time it was to be an 'open' university, modelled in part on the British Open University. It was officially incorporated May 18, 1977.

Athabasca University is currently located in Edmonton, though it serves students throughout the province. It is primarily a correspondence university utilizing home study kits supplemented by telephone tutorials and local cablecasts. There are no admission requirements other than that the student must be 18 years or older. Athabasca University currently offers courses leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of General Studies, and Bachelor of Administration.

The emergence of Athabasca University is of interest for the following reasons. First, it is of interest simply because it is a new university. Created from scratch rather than as a branch of the University of Alberta or as an upgrading of a previously established college, it must of necessity define for itself those features which subsequently become sociological "givens". The "who", "what", and "how" of this process are therefore of fundamental interest to any sociologist who would wish to comprehend either the functioning of this particular institution or its role in the provincial system of higher education. Second, the examination of its evolution may prove to be a useful case study of the emergence of new institutions in general. Theories of organizational change have tended to focus on established institutions with relatively little attention being paid to the creation of new organizations. Third, Athabasca University represents something of an anomaly in that it continued to function, and eventually to prosper, after the loss of its original mandate. While one wishes to avoid animistic concepts and reification when speaking of the institution's "survival" and "adaptation", it is nevertheless an intriguing phenomenon. Fourth, Athabasca University was one of the first 'open' universities on this continent. The forces which gave rise to its appearence in Alberta

may be of some significance to the emergence of similar institutions elsewhere. This is particularly the case in light of the fact that conditions in Alberta were very different from those in England where the Open University model was first developed. Finally, the fact that it is a new *type* of institution may have implications for broader sociological theories in higher education. Specifically, this thesis will argue that its emergence represents a movement away from the human capital model as a justification for investment in higher education, and that this in turn has certain implications for the literature on equality of educational opportunity, and social tracking through the differentiation of higher education institutions.

The central question of this thesis could be stated as, "How did Athabasca University survive as an institution after the loss of its original mandate as a satellite university, and how has it continued to survive in its open university format?" This was the original impetus behind the thesis and the focus of the research, and it was seen as a significant problem for the first four reasons stated above. During the course of the research, however, it became increasingly clear that the answer could only be understood in the larger context of the broader sociological issues in higher education. What began as a relatively straightforward problem in the emergence of a particular institution became more and more a study of the differentiation and vocationalization of the higher education system in Alberta and a discussion of its theoretical implications. Thus the central theme of this thesis became a series of theoretical issues:

1. What is the status of the 'human capital' model as an ideology in Alberta higher education? Is it dominant? Has it undergone change

or a shift in emphasis? Is the emergence of Athabasca University consistent with this ideology? Are there competing ideologies emerging?

2. What is the significance of Athabasca University's emergence for the equality of educational opportunity in Alberta? Does its emergence change the nature of this issue?
3. What is the significance of the emergence of Athabasca University for the theories of social mobility/social tracking? To what extent does the diffusion of the open university model represent a further differentiation of the system of higher education? What are its implications for the further vocationalization of higher education?

In other words, while the central question remains to explain the emergence of Athabasca University as an open university, what is at stake is our understanding of a number of crucial theoretical issues.

The methodology employed was primarily historical documentary research. Athabasca University was very co-operative in allowing access to the minutes and position papers of the Interim Governing Authority and the Governing Council, as well as internal documents and the President's correspondence. The main disadvantage of the documentary approach is that the researcher does not have access to the informal processes and exchanges which do not find their way into the official records, and there is a tendency for unsuccessful policies to be underrepresented. On the other hand, the alternative of interview data would have had the corresponding drawback that there is a tendency for the interviewee to project current opinions and hindsight back in time, and to selectively recall events. The use of official records has the

additional advantage of making available a greater wealth of detail covering longer periods than could be obtained from a one or two hour interview.

The discussion on Canadian issues in higher education was based upon an analysis of University Affairs, a publication of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. University Affairs provides a major forum for issues of interest to the higher education community in Canada, and as such, an analysis of the assumptions and concerns which appeared in its pages over a period of twenty years should provide a reasonable picture of the major trends in higher education during that time.

Chapter II consists of a review of the relevant sociological literature, including theories of organizational change, the human capital model, and social mobility/social tracking. Chapter III outlines the major issues in higher education in Canada between 1959 and 1979. Chapter IV deals with the Alberta context, both in terms of the development of a higher education system and the changes in supporting ideologies. Chapter V begins the examination of the emergence of Athabasca University, focusing primarily on a descriptive historical analysis of the forces and factors which contributed to its evolution and survival. Chapter VI takes this analysis one step further by comparing this evolution with the development of the Open University model in England, thus drawing out those ideological factors and adaptations which might not otherwise be readily apparent. The implications of this case study are discussed in Chapter VII, with a reexamination of the theories discussed in Chapter II in light of the emergence of Athabasca University.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL APPROACHES

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

As mentioned in the Introduction, there has not been a great deal in the general sociological literature written on institutional emergence. An examination of the theories of organizational change have, in general, revealed three great weaknesses.

First, they tend to focus on private enterprise, voluntary organizations, or government departments. Universities, however, are neither 'fish nor fowl', but rather a hybrid of all three. Assumptions appropriate to the study of change within a private enterprise, which produces a product in competition with other businesses, are inappropriate to public universities which are primarily dependent upon government financing; yet assumptions appropriate to the study of government departments are little improvement since universities operate (at least in theory) independently and have their own unique functions and traditions.

Second, most of the studies of organizational change have been largely atheoretical. They have tended to focus on the limited concepts of efficiency, cost effectiveness, productivity, size, and so on. Larger issues, such as the goals, assumptions, and control of organizations have mostly gone unexamined. While this is often appropriate for studies concerned with specific operational changes within the context of the

organizational 'givens', it is not suitable for the examination of institutional emergence where it is the evolution of these 'givens' which is of interest.

Third, and closely related to the previous two points, most of these studies limit their analysis to the level of the institution, or some subdivision, with little attention to its interaction with other institutions. Again, this is more appropriate for studies of change in established organizations, or even for the emergence of a private enterprise which is capable of 'creating itself', but it is unsuitable for the study of the evolution of an institution whose mandate is dictated from outside. The emergence of Athabasca University involved not only outside government agencies, other universities, and the education elite, but also the broader ideological forces manifested in the educational issues of the day. It is thus necessary to have an analysis which is not limited to the examination of internal relationships, but one which is instead capable of including the larger context.[1]

Mayer Zald's 'political economy' approach would therefore seem to be the most useful. "This approach postulates that economic and political forces, structures, pressures, and constraints (1) are among the most significant motivators of change and (2) are the key factors in shaping the direction of change."[2] By the term "political economy", Zald refers to an analysis which focuses primarily upon the interaction of the political and economic processes within and between organizations. This requires an analysis of the polity in terms of organizational constitutions, the distribution of power, the critical transfers of power, the process of demand aggregation (that is, the processes by which the desire for change is articulated and channelled), the role of

key individuals, and the external alliances and linkages. At the same time, one must include an analysis of the organization's economy in terms of its internal allocation of resources, the division of labour, and the incentive economies, as well as external relationships.[3]

Zald's model, vague though it is, provides an orienting framework for exploratory research. Instead of focusing on such narrow concepts as efficiency or productivity, it provides for an analysis of goal creation, displacement, and change, and the other basic 'givens' of the organization.

Zald's is a middle-range conceptual scheme capable of simultaneously dealing with the internal processes of the organization and its relations with external agencies and forces. This, as indicated above, is vital to the examination of institutional emergence rather than simple change within an established organization. Thus, the political economy approach goes beyond an analysis of the internal structure, processes, and goals to include consideration of the relevant political and administrative elites, the impact of broad economic and demographic forces, and changes in the competing ideological models within which the institution operates. No institution exists in a vacuum; no matter how self-contained, how inward-looking it may be in its definition of goals and their successful achievement, the larger social reality must impinge on its development to a greater or lesser degree, and these outside forces must be taken into account if one is to fully understand its evolution. By the same token, however, an analysis which is restricted to the level of the broad social forces which affect the political and economic relationships between institutions risks underestimating the importance of the role played by key individuals within

the institution; that is, risks reifying the institution.

Furthermore, this middle-range framework is also capable of coping with the hybrid nature of the university, in that universities are both dependent and independent of external agencies and ideologies, even after they have been firmly established.

The study of the emergence of Athabasca University using the political economy model therefore requires a thorough understanding of (1) the demographic and economic trends in Canadian society as they relate to higher education, (2) the resulting trends in Canadian higher education, (3) the corresponding changes in the educational ideologies of the competing political and administrative elites, and (4) the relationship of these elites to Athabasca University and to each other.

Another advantage of Zald's political economy approach is that it assumes neither consensus nor conflict. Thus the researcher is free to interpret events and structures as representing either, both, or neither. For example, an institutional change may represent a consensus compromise between two factions while simultaneously indicating the defeat of a third group. Or, two groups may agree on a new institutional mandate or constitution which allows each group to pursue its own goals, oblivious of the others' motivation or the potential contradiction of their respective positions. In contrast, most structural functional models assume consensus on the institution's 'givens' and consequently encounter difficulty in adequately accounting for change in the institution's goals, and so on; while Marxist and conflict models tend to adopt an almost conspiratorial view of institutional change, a conscious desire of one group to gain an advantage over another. While there is something to be said for both of these approaches, the political economy

model is clearly the most flexible.

Even so, certain modifications had to be made to the approach for it to apply. For example, initially the polity of Athabasca University consisted only of an 'Interim Governing Authority', so an analysis of the internal polity at this stage must of necessity be rather limited. Furthermore, a greater emphasis was placed on the external polity than might normally have been the case, not only because the initial impetus, funding, constitution, and goals were set by outside agencies, but also because the roles and relationships of the internal polity at this stage were to a large measure modelled upon those of existing institutions, rather than having internally evolved over a period of years. In fact, it is partly the degree to which Athabasca University structures were determined by the dominant educational concerns of the day which makes it worthy of study.

It should be emphasized, however, that Zald's political economy approach is merely a conceptual framework useful for orienting research, and not an elaborate model or theory of organizational change. In this particular study, it was used primarily to systematize what would otherwise have been 'common sense' decisions as to which material should be included in the analysis. Zald's conceptual scheme is so broad as to subsume the other models to be discussed in this chapter, but it is too vague and general to be of much use independently. While Zald's framework provides an overall research strategy—an approach to the analysis of institutional change—one must turn to other models to provide a specific theoretical understanding of the content of that analysis. The usefulness of the political economy model, then, rests with the selection of the secondary theoretical approaches adopted.

THE HUMAN CAPITAL MODEL

In order to understand change in higher education it is first necessary to place it in its ideological context: what exactly *is* a university, and what is the function of higher education.

There is, of course, no simple answer to this question. The expansion of higher education during the past century, and particularly in the last twenty-five years, has also represented an expansion of the role (or roles) of higher education. Universities, community colleges, technical institutes, open universities, and the other components of the modern post-secondary system, each serve their own separate specialized functions. Even within the modern university itself, separate faculties and programs are understood to serve different purposes and are justified on different grounds. Individual educators within the same department may disagree over priorities, some (to take but one possible example) stressing the research function while others emphasize teaching. The various groups which have a stake in higher education, such as students, faculty, professional associations, educational administrators, parents, and governments, all have slightly different concerns and interests, and pull the universities in different directions. As with the larger society in which they operate, the universities and other post-secondary institutions have become pluralistic communities in which each group pursues its separate ends and what consensus exists is largely unstated and unexamined. To quote Cyril Belshaw in Towers Besieged: The Dilemma Of The Creative University:

> It is interesting, and symptomatic of contemporary confusion, that very few of those who write seriously about universities examine their purposes and characteristics in a systematic way. I think this is because the

> writers are usually university people themselves, they assume their own values unconsciously. They also find it too difficult to express a view which is at the same time logical and representative of the divergent individual goals of their colleagues.
>
> When there is passing reference to objectives, it is usually vague, easy to agree with, and applicable to other institutions of higher education, if not to schools as well.[4]

Nevertheless, certain general themes or models of higher education may be discerned in the literature. The first of these, which will be referred to in the present study as the "enlightenment" model, represents the 'traditional' view of the university and is most commonly associated with discussions of the "liberal arts". The second is the "human capital" model, which came to dominate higher education during the 1950s and 1960s, though its roots go back at least as far as those of the enlightenment model. The third is a recent refinement (some might say 'perversion') of the human capital model, and will be referred to here as the "manpower" model. All three represent 'ideal types', and individual institutions and post-secondary systems will usually incorporate elements of each, though one model or another will tend to predominate. It is also not unusual to find a single author quoting elements of all three models in support of his arguments, apparently without any recognition that they represent opposing or contradictory positions.

The central characteristic of the enlightenment model is that it is based on the principle that learning is of value in and of itself. Perhaps the best known proponent of this view was Cardinal Newman, founder of Dublin University:

> I am asked what is the end of university education, and of the liberal or philosophical knowledge which I conceive it to impart; I answer that...it has a very tangible, real, and sufficient end, though that end cannot be divided from that knowledge itself. Know-

> ledge is capable of being its own end. Such is the constitution of the human mind that any kind of knowledge, if it really be such, is its own reward.[5]

Education, under the enlightenment model, is not a means to some economic end, such as the attainment of professional qualifications or an assured supply of trained manpower, but an end in itself.

Opposed to this was the Baconian philosophy that education must be of some utility in the practical world. Bacon had condemned

> ...a kind of adoration of the mind...by means whereof men have withdrawn themselves too much from the contemplation of nature, and the observation of experience, and have tumbled up and down in their own reason and conceits.[6]

Whatever the intellectual value of debating how many angels can stand on the head of a pin, Bacon and his followers insisted that knowledge should be for the benefit and use of men, that is, serve an end beyond learning for its own sake. Some 250 years later, in Newman's time, these arguments were being expressed in terms almost indistinguishable from the present forms of the human capital and manpower models. To quote Cardinal Newman's summary of the opposition:

> Now this is what some great men are very slow to allow; they insist that education should be confined to some particular and narrow end, and should issue in some definite work, which can be weighed and measured. They argue as if everything, as well as every person, had its price; and that where there has been a great outlay, they have a right to expect a return in kind. This they call making education and instruction "useful", and "utility" becomes their watchword. With a fundamental principle of this nature, they very naturally go on to ask, what there is to show for the expense of a university; what is the real worth in the market of the article called "a liberal education", on the supposition that it does not teach us definitely how to advance our manufactures, or to improve our lands, or to better our civil economy; or again, if it does not at once make this man a lawyer, that an engineer, and that a surgeon; or at least if it does not lead to discoveries in chemistry, astronomy, geology, magnetism, and science of

every kind.[7]

Against this view of the practical end of education, the proponents of the enlightenment model argued that education—as opposed to mere training—was to develop the well-rounded individual, the 'cultured gentleman'. In addition to a cultivated intellect, a disciplined and logical mind, the graduate was expected to possess a discerning taste, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of his life, a sense of responsibility to his society and civilization, and the other attributes of what we would today term the 'self-actualized' individual.[8] Education which was narrowly vocational could not provide this:

> There can be no doubt that every art is improved by confining the professor of it to that single study. But, *although the art itself is advanced by this concentration of mind in its service, the individual who is confined to it goes back.* The advantage of the community is nearly an inverse ratio with his own.
>
> Society itself requires some other contribution from each individual, besides the particular duties of his profession. And, if no such liberal intercourse be established, it is the common failing of human nature, to be engrossed with petty views and interests, to underrate the importance of all in which we are not concerned, and to carry our partial notions into cases where they are inapplicable, to act, in short, as so many unconnected units, displacing and repelling one another.[9]

And again:

> But the professional character is not the only one which a person engaged in a profession has to support. He is not always on duty. There are services he owes, which are neither parochial, nor forensic, nor military, nor to be described by any such epithet of civil regulation, and yet are in no wise inferior to those that bear these authoritative titles; inferior in neither intrinsic value, nor their moral import, nor their impression upon society. As a friend, as a companion, as a citizen at large; in the connections of domestic life; in the improvement and embellishment of his leisure, he has a sphere of action, revolving, if you please, with the sphere of his profession, but not clashing with it; in which if he can show none of the advantages of an improved understanding, whatever may be his skill or proficiency

in the other, he is no more than an ill-educated man.[10]

Thus, universities under the enlightenment model were not simply centers of professional training, but were expected to produce the intellectual, cultural, and ruling elite of the nation. As such, they were elite institutions, even when there was some provision made for the more promising sons of the 'lower orders' through scholarships and sponsored mobility.

Higher education under the enlightenment model was also necessarily perceived as representing 'consumption'. As an end in itself, education was by definition incapable of providing a direct economic return. Professional and vocational training which had a demonstrable economic usefulness, were on that account not considered part of liberal education. Consequently, liberal studies undertaken for their own sake must necessarily represent consumption. And since higher education was largely the preserve of the elite, it was a form of conspicuous consumption for the upper classes: one partook of higher education because it was expected of gentlemen, not because it was required for economic advantage or determined one's social economic status. The benefits accruing from the establishment of universities were thought to be of a cultural rather than economic nature. Universities, like opera houses and art galleries, were the result of economic growth and prosperity, not the cause.

By the late 1950's, however, this view of higher education as consumption was almost completely displaced by the human capital model, which held that expenditures on education were an investment in human capital and the nation's economic progress. To quote Theodore Schultz, best known of the human capital model's modern proponents:

> Although it is obvious that people acquire useful skills and knowledge, it is not obvious that these skills and knowledge are a form of capital, that this capital is in substantial part a product of deliberate investment, that it has grown in Western societies at a much faster rate than conventional (nonhuman) capital, and that this growth may well be the most distinctive feature of the economic system....
>
> Much of what we call consumption constitutes investment in human capital. Direct expenditures on education, health, and internal migration to take advantage of better job opportunities are clear examples. Earnings foregone by mature students attending school and by workers acquiring on-the-job training are equally clear examples.[11]

Viewed in this light, investment in education was as vital — and often a precondition for — investment in industry. Investment in human capital, as with any other investment, could be expected to yield a measurable economic return, and was no longer seen as simply personal consumption.

Human capital could be considered from two perspectives: that of the individual, and that of the state. For the state, investment in human capital was a necessary prerequisite for economic progress and successful competition with other industrial nations. The first issue of University Affairs, for example, quotes Cyril James:

> The U.S.S.R. is putting a tremendous amount of money and effort into education because it realizes that trained men — not natural resources — are the foundation of national prosperity and essential for continuing economic growth.
>
> In the world in which we live more people with a good education are required for national progress, and if we in Canada want to maintain our prosperity and our welfare we too must find ways to see that the brightest of our youngsters are encouraged and enabled to get all of the education of which they are capable.[12]

Similarly, it was often argued that Third World nations were underdeveloped primarily due to widespread illiteracy and a disatrous lack of graduates. Post-war Europe, for example, was said to have fewer intact capital resources than many African nations, but the recovery of the European economies proceeded at a much more rapid rate than did the development of

the African states. The differences in human capital, particularly in terms of education, seemed to account for this. Thus the human capital model was adopted by such agencies as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, and was exported throughout the world as the basis for most of the development strategies and policies of the past two decades.[13]

From the individual's point of view, working one's way through college (or other forms of training) represented an investment in his own earning capacities. A medical student, for example, would be prepared to undertake a long and costly course of studies in anticipation of realizing a substantial return on this investment upon entering the medical profession.[14] Even here, however, the state may expect to receive an indirect benefit in that the higher wages realized by the trained worker imply higher tax revenues as well. Karabel and Halsey also make the interesting observation that:

> ...what must be further remarked about the theory of human capital is the direct appeal to pro-capitalist ideological sentiment that resides in its insistence that the worker is a *holder of capital* (as embodied in his skills and knowledge) and that he has the *capacity to invest* (in himself). Thus in a single bold conceptual stroke the *wage earner*, who holds no property and controls neither the process nor the product of his labour, is transformed into a *capitalist*.[15]

In any event, the human capital model was generally thought to account for the obvious correlation between years of education and salaries, and students were encouraged to continue their education as an investment in their future, and to regard a university degree as a key to all opportunity. Thus the model encouraged the demand for university entrance on the part of students (and their parents) at the same time that it urged governments to meet this demand.

The human capital model was popularized in Canada by the Economic Council of Canada, which tended to emphasize the need to expand higher education and university-based research in order to catch up with the United States:

> One of the important implications of our analysis is the important contrast between Canada and the United States as regards the broad patterns of past investment. In Canada relatively more resources have been put into capital facilities, while in the United States relatively more resources have been put into the development of a more highly educated labour force and into the development and application of new technology.... Over the past half century, the level of education in the Canadian Labour force has fallen gradually behind the United States, especially as regards the proportion of persons completing high school and university.[16]

As a result of this perceived failure to keep pace with the United States, the Council concluded that:

> ...the shortage of skilled and trained technical, professional and managerial manpower is even more critical than the problem of enlarging the physical facilities required for output.[17]

and recommended:

> ...tremendous expansion...especially at the university and post-secondary technical school level in terms of higher enrolment ratios and retention rates for those of post-secondary age...
> ...more rapid development of facilities for a sharply accelerating flow of professional and other highly skilled manpower at the post-graduate university level — the level at which we have made the least progress to date in the Canadian educational system.[18]

The following year the Economic Council announced that:

> In its studies the Council has found the rate of return from investment in education, both to the individual and the economy as a whole, is at least as large, and probably larger than, almost any other form of investment. This has led us to recommend that the advancement of education and training at all levels in Canada be given a very high place in the public policy and that investment in education be accorded first place in the scale of priorities.[19]

Naturally enough, Canadian educators were not slow to adopt the human capital model themselves. The highly influential Bladen Commission's report on Financing Higher Education In Canada said essentially the same thing:

> ...we believe that there is general recognition of the importance of developing to the full the intellectual resources of our people. In this country, as elswhere, this recognition has been connected with new concern for economic growth and a new assessment of the dependence of that growth on the supply of highly intelligent, highly trained, and highly educated people. But if our future wealth depends upon education so that expenditure on education is properly looked on as investment likely to yield a high economic return, our growing wealth makes it easier to accept the cost of education without reference to that economic return....
>
> We therefore conclude that our governments must establish the demand on the part of students for higher education and try to meet it.... The people demand it; our economic growth requires it; our governments must take the action necessary to implement it.[20]

The human capital model thus became the theoretical base upon which the explosive expansion of higher education in Canada was justified.

The model remained practically unchallenged throughout the 1960s, its only opposition coming from a few traditionalists who reacted against what they perceived as the dehumanizing human capital approach and argued the enlightenment model's view that the university's mission was intellectual and cultural, not economic:

> Education should be considered as a Canadian problem and not as a race with anyone.... Most emphatically, Canadian university graduates should not be considered mere units of military armament. In fact it cannot be emphasized too strongly that the whole manpower concept is quite foreign to the real purpose of a university....[21]

Most educators, however, were only too eager to accept the model's support for the expansion of higher education while arguing that the emphasis on the economic benefits of this expansion was in no way incon-

sistent with the university's intellectual and cultural functions:

> All levels of government direct staggering amounts of capital into education today because they recognize the relationship between education and economic growth; and the public sanctions such expenditures today because it recognizes the relationship between education and the nation's steadily rising standard of living.
>
> Of course we must always remember and ensure that education obviously has other than economic ends; that the prime task of any Canadian system of education must always be the transmission of the tradition, the ideals and the purposes of Western culture. The assumption— and I think it is a fair one— is simply that to fulfill its social and cultural functions a system of education must first of all be economically efficient.[22]

By the early 1970s, however, the human capital model was under attack in terms both of its basic assumptions and its specific policy recommendations. Writers such as Lester Thurow and Barry Bluestone questioned the model's contention that employment status and wage rates could be explained simply on the basis of variations in human capital. To quote Barry Bluestone:

> Correctly enough, the human capital theorists observed the strong correlation between education, training, skills, and competence of the work force and the incomes individuals and families receive. They noted that physicians have more education (human capital) than janitors and that doctors are better paid. Based on so simple an observation, the "human capitals" extrapolated their finding to cover all labour-force research. Treating labour as shells into which human capital was poured, in greater or lesser amounts, they were able to "explain" the wages and employment of all individuals. Those who invested more in themselves would (almost automatically) find employment more often, reap higher wages, and benefit from greater economic security.
>
> ...On the basis of their reasoning and the assumption that labour markets were workably competitive, the human-capital theorists concluded, in essence, that those who earned little, those who were involuntarily employed part time and those who ended up with no employment at all were unskilled and unproductive by *definition*,... The labour market was assumed to be perfect, so that once the human capital of an individual was raised, he or she would be able to rise above low-wage employment, underemployment, or joblessness. *The solution of the poverty problem thus resolved into a technical exercise of finding the right*

> *combination of manpower programs or human-resource development schemes to lift each individual from personal disadvantage.*
>
> But many of those who suffer from low wages and unemployment *have* a considerable amount of human capital. They fail to find jobs that pay a living wage because of racism, sexism, economic depression, and uneven development of industries and regions. Compared with some workers who have found steady employment in high-wage industries, these workers have, in many cases, even more human capital, but happen to be the wrong color or sex, to be too young or too old, or to live on the wrong side of town or in the wrong part of the country. The inadequacy of the economic system is a more important cause of poverty than the inadequacy of people.[23]

The failure of the American "War on Poverty", which was premised largely on the human capital model, would seem to support Bluestone's contention that "...the human-capital school has attempted to immunize the patient when it should have been eradicating the disease."[24] Once it was demonstrated that investment in human capital was not sufficient to ensure either personal advancement or the eradication of poverty, the expansion of higher education (and particularly the creation of community colleges, which were explicitly the agency for educational investment in the lower-classes and minority groups) ceased to be seen as a panacea for all of society's ills.

The major reaction to the human capital model, however, came as a result of increasing graduate unemployment (or underemployment), decreasing enrolments, and spiraling cost, all of which seemed to indicate that the limits of university expansion had been reached. While the model postulated that investment in human capital inevitably resulted in economic growth—probably equal to or even in excess of the scale of the investment— this was not, in fact, happening. The Canadian economy was experiencing recession, high unemployment, and inflation. Instead of the predicted phenomenon of an expanding economy absorbing an expanding

graduate class, the economy was being over-supplied with expensive, over-trained manpower. This in turn led to a falling off of enrolments as the public realized that personal investment in higher education, both in terms of the direct costs and in foregone earnings, might not provide an adequate return. The increasing public disillusionment with university (especially undergraduate) degrees, was also reflected in a growing resentment for the still rising cost of university education to the taxpayer, and a subsequent reordering of priorities by governments. The unlimited investment in higher education which had been premised on the human capital model came to an abrupt end.

Some writers, such as Alexander Lockhart, concluded that the human capital model had *never* been appropriate in the Canadian context:

> Here is an early example of the intellectual colonization which has recently become a controversial subject in Canadian universities. Canada's economy, though dominated by American capital, is not analogous to the American economy. At the time (1965), the principle areas of human capital shortage in the US economy were in the aero-space, electronic components, and other industries dependent upon public contract and subsidy which in turn were part of the function of America's role as a world power.
>
> Clearly, Canada has no such potential, as illustrated by the Government's foreclosure of the 'Arrow', all-Canadian fighter aircraft, and the subsequent collapse of the Canadian aircraft industry. To have imported uncritically a theoretical model designed to meet the manpower goals reflected the American reality would thus seem illogical in the extreme.[25]

Lockhart provides a convincing analysis of the errors of the Economic Council of Canada's *assumption* throughout the 1960s that the demand for highly trained manpower in Canada was outstripping supply, and he also questions the presumed economic benefits of university expansion in Canada on the scale experienced in the United States. He points out that Sweden achieved a higher level of industrialization and a slightly better standard of living than had Canada during the 1960s, but with only

half the number of graduates.[26]

The Economic Council of Canada was itself expressing reservations about the costs of unlimited expansion of higher education as early as 1970. The focus of its reports shifted from an emphasis on the necessity for investment in higher education to one on the need for greater efficiency, cost effectiveness, co-ordination to reduce duplication, and a general need to reduce costs.[27] The Council's 1971 publication, Canadian Higher Education In The Seventies, included a series of articles re-stressing the consumption view of education, particuarly for purposes of predicting future enrolments. Educators and administrators who had come to expect the unqualified support of economists in their bid for a larger share of the GNP, suddenly found their former allies urging accountalibity and even cutbacks in higher education. To quote J. F. Leddy, then (1971) President of the University of Windsor:

> Until very recently it was customary for parents and friends to urge students to go to university because it was the main gateway to a comfortable and well-paid career in one of a variety of professions. And it was usual to support the establishment of new universities and the large expansion of exsisting institutions since they were seen as the prime key to national and regional development both of the economy and of the social structure....
>
> There are times when the economy does falter and when that happens, as is now the case, the very arguments used to promote enrolment and to secure funds for university expansion are turned around, to the reverse effect, to cut back enrolment and to limit university development. When the economy is buoyant, when graduates have a choice of three or four attractive positions pressed upon them by competing employers, as was the situation only two or three years ago, universities are in high favour, and the public financial authorities in an almost genial mood. When recessions come, the tune changes. Parents and friends begin to wonder anxiously whether there is any point in high school graduates going to university if they cannot be sure of getting a good position immediately afterwards.
>
> Yet, in spite of this swing in the pendulum, Canadian Universities have not changed during the last five years in

> their performance and in their genuine importance to Canada. All that has happened is that those who begin and end their supperficial case for the university with economic and materialistic considerations only, now find that, if they can ride smoothly upward with favourable arguments provided by the Economic Council of Canada in a given year, they must be prepared to plunge on down the slope of the roller coaster a few years later in a time of depression.[28]

Nevertheless, there was no returning to the enlightenment model.[29] Criticism of the human capital model was generally directed at specific details and recommendations of the model, rather than to the basic premise that expenditure in higher education represents investment. For example, Lockhart's critique focused on the applicability of a particular recommendation, that of the development of Ph.D. programs in science, to the Canadian context. While he succeeded in demonstrating the illogic of that policy being adopted in Canada— and by extension, the model's contention that economic growth inevitably follows investment in human capital— he did not question that people represent an economic resource which requires investment or that the function of higher education is primarily vocational. In other words, rather than a complete rejection of the human capital model in favour of the enlightenment model, all that happened was that investment in human capital was demoted from a 'necessary and sufficient' factor for economic growth, to a 'necessary but not sufficient' factor. Similarly, certain other assumptions, such as the assertion that the labour market is freely competitive, have been dropped or refined in recent years, but these changes represent the emergence of a *new* model, rather than a return to the enlightenment model.

In the present study, this new version of the human capital model shall be referred to as the "manpower" model. The manpower model is similar to the human capital model with this essential difference:

whereas the human capital model viewed the development of *any* post-secondary program as an investment in economic growth through the creation of new human capital, the manpower model is more narrowly interpreted to recommend investment in *only* those programs for which there is a demonstrable demand for its graduates in the labour force. In other words, investment in higher education under the manpower model is determined by the specific manpower requirements of the economy, rather than premised on the development of the economy through a general rise in the population's level of education. Whereas the human capital model viewed higher education as a prerequisite for the development of the nation's industries, the manpower model considers universities *as* a national industry, where investment can be made on the basis of such criteria as the usefulness of the product (both in terms of graduates and research), efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and so on, just like any other public corporation.

In some ways, the emergence of the manpower model represents a further movement away from the enlightenment model. The enlightenment model emphasized that any learning was worthwhile for its own sake; the human capital model similarly accepted that any learning was an investment in human capital; but the manpower model rejects 'any' learning in favour of specific, vocationally and economically 'useful' learning. Thus, for example, the enlightenment model favoured a 'liberal arts' program as the best approach to general intellectual development; and the human capital model accepted 'liberal studies' as a useful investment in generalized skills; but proponents of the manpower model regard 'liberal studies' with a great deal of skepticism as its direct economic and vocational relevance is difficult to demonstrate. Under the manpower

model, then, one would expect a trend towards an even greater vocationalization of higher education than under the human capital model.

Similarly, since government investment in higher education is premised upon the manpower needs of the economy, there is some desire on the part of governments to assess students for the costs of that portion of their higher education which is of private benefit, that is, which represents individual 'consumption'.[30]

In summary, then, there are three models of the nature and function of higher education which are discernible in the literature previous to the emergence of Athabasca University: the enlightenment model, the human capital model, and the manpower model. The enlightenment model values learning for its own sake, while the other two models value education for its economic benefits. Universities under the enlightenment model are elite institutions and represent 'consumption', while under the other two models they are mass institutions and represent investment in human capital. The human capital model views investment in any post-secondary program as beneficial and a determining factor in economic growth, while the manpower model recommends investment only in programs for which there is a specific and demonstrable economic need.

Having described these three models and their relationships, there still remains one further theoretical issue in higher education which has an important bearing on the emergence of Athabasca University, namely the differentiation of higher education institutions and the question of equality of educational opportunity.

EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Accessibility and equality of educational opportunity is one of the most convoluted and contentious issues current in higher education, but the following discussion must necessarily restrict itself to those aspects which are relevant to the emergence of Athabasca University.

The question of accessibility to university education was not really raised until the fifties; before that, proponents of equality of educational opportunity were more concerned with achieving it at the elementary and secondary school levels. A university education was regarded as something of a luxury, unnecessary for any but the very top professions, and unsuitable for the majority of school leavers.[31] Up until the mid-fifties in Canada, higher education was viewed largely as consumption, available to those who were willing to pay for it, providing that they met certain minimum academic requirements. Poor but deserving students could avail themselves of scholarships if they were outstanding academically, or they could work their way through college with summer and/or part-time jobs, which were relatively plentiful.[32]

This view of higher education began to change in the late fifties for several reasons. First, achievement of near universal education at progressively higher grades at the elementary and secondary school level resulted in a natural escalation to a concern with accessibility to higher education.[33] This trend was exaggerated by the very great expansion of higher education which occurred in the sixties. The transformation of universities from elite to mass institutions meant that accessibility to university became relevant to increasingly large numbers of high school graduates. As the demand for university places rose, so

did the importance of the issue of equality of opportunity in their allocation.

Second, the changing manpower needs of the modern Canadian economy and the subsequent emergence of the human capital model resulted in a new attitude towards university. The increasing vocationalization of higher education and the increasing emphasis on university credentials in the labour market, meant that higher education could no longer be viewed merely as consumption. Instead, attendance at university came to be seen as an investment in the individual's human capital, and crucial to his career and life chances. As such, barriers to higher education represented barriers to the 'good life', and equality of educational opportunity became as significant at the university level as it had previously been at the elementary and secondary levels.

Finally, the human capital model's emphasis on the investment aspect of higher education carried with it the implication that the exculsion of any class or group from higher education represented under-investment in that group, and consequently a waste of a potential resource.[34] Equality of educational opportunity was therefore no longer simply a moral imperative, but also an economic one. Furthermore, it was widely believed, under the human capital model, that poverty could itself be eliminated if only the oppressed groups could be exposed to appropriate levels of education, including university.[35] Accessibility to higher education therefore became the central issue in social reform. Similarly, if the expansion that was occurring in higher education in terms of absolute numbers did not also involve an expansion of the class representation in higher education, it might imply that the less able of the upper classes were in attendance, while the most able of the lower

classes were not. This, under the human capital model, would represent an over-investment in the education of the upper classes and an under-investment in the lower classes. Thus the human capital model worked against elitism in higher education and reinforced populist democratic sentiment with a sound economic motive.

The crucial issue here, however, is that the transformation of universities from elite to mass institutions necessarily extended their role in social mobility and social stratification. Not only were more people receiving higher education, both in terms of absolute numbers and as a proportion of the 18-24 age cohort, but the number of occupations which required formal training beyond high school also increased significantly. Higher education therefore became a major factor in fitting people into the work force, and consequently in assigning social status and rewards.[36]

The role of education, including higher education, in social mobility appeared to many writers in the fifties and sixties to be straightforward and obvious. Proponents of the human capital model stressed the connection between formal education credentials and occupational attainment, finding a correlation between education and income in more than thirty countries.[37] Others stressed the shift from 'ascribed' to 'achieved' status in modern industrial societies, as a result of the shift from family-based socialization to formal education systems.[38] In either case, the function of the education system in modern industrial economies of allocating the student graduate to his position in the work force (through granting the necessary credentials) was seen as the key to social mobility. To quote Olive Banks:

> A close relationship between formal education and occupation is bound to have important consequences for occupation and hence social mobility. Under such conditions, educational achievement might well become the most important way to reach a high status occupation, whether this involves social mobility upwards or the prevention of social mobility downwards. It is customary to use a model of this kind in describing modern industrial societies, and to suggest not only that there has been a movement in this direction in the past, but that it will continue in an accelerated form in the future. Havinghurst, for example, suggests that in this type of society, "there is likely to be increased opportunity for people with talent and ambition to get the education they need for 'better' positions and to achieve these positions, while those with less talent and ambition will tend to be downwardly mobile. The industrial and democratic society of the year 2000 will be even more open and fluid than the most highly industrialized societies today, so that education will be the main instrument for upward mobility, and a lack of education or failure to do well in one's education will be the principle cause of downward mobility."[39]

Thus in this view, any expansion of higher education would seem to represent an expansion of opportunities for social mobility.

There are, however, a number of reasons why this may not be so. To begin with, a mere increase in the numbers attending university may not reflect a real expansion of accessibility. To quote Robert Pike:

> ....from the point of view of the sociologist, accessibility cannot be defined solely in terms of numbers because one of the major features of relevant government policy during the 1960s was not only to make the universities more accessible to more students, but also to increase the proportions of students from traditionally low participation groups— for example, women, young people from lower class backgrounds, and the members of certain disadvantaged minorities— among the university population.[40]

In other words, it is possible that the increase in the proportion of the 18-24 age cohort attending university may come entirely from the upper classes, such that the proportion of the lower classes attaining university does not increase, and that lower class participation decreases relative

to that of the upper classes. This would represent a further restriction of upward social mobility, rather than the reverse.

Another factor is the ability of the economy to absorb new recruits into the higher occupation categories. Models of social mobility generally assumed that there was 'room at the top' of the occupation heirarchy for two reasons: First, the birth rate of the upper and middle classes was assumed to be significantly lower than that of the lower or working classes, such that the top levels of the society must recruit additional replacements from the lower orders.[41] Second, according to the human capital model, the proportion of skilled and professional occupations in modern industrial economies is constantly increasing, thus creating a demand for additional recruits from the upwardly mobile sons and daughters of the working classes.[42]

The difficulty here is that such upward mobility is not necessarily tied to educational attainment, since these 'vacancies' would presumably exist whether or not the education system was graduating a sufficient number of qualified personnel to fill them. In the eventuality that there were more vacancies than graduates, it is likely that some upward mobility would take place through on-the-job training, promotion 'from the floor', and so on, quite independently of the formal education system.[43] However, the picture is further complicated by internal and international migration, for these 'vacancies' in the skilled and professional ranks may be filled by immigrants with the appropriate formal education credentials, if the local education system is incapable of producing the necessary graduates.[44]

In any event, it would seem clear from the widespread unemployment or underemployment of higher education graduates in the early seventies

that the limits of the expansion of the professional and skilled classes to absorb new recruits from the lower classes had been reached. Thus, accessibility to higher education could not, in and of itself, guarantee upward mobility as the graduates with lower class origins may be the ones left unemployed.[45]

Another flaw in the suggestion that the expansion of higher education necessarily represents an expansion of opportunities for upward social mobility is the problem of the 'inflation' of educational credentials. To quote Banks:

> ...although it has been argued that an increase in the provision of higher education in Britain is likely to increase the relationship between education and occupation, it is also possible for higher education to become so general in the population that it no longer differentiates sufficiently to act as a criterion for occupational selection. Indeed, it has been suggested that the relationship is already declining in the United States as the proportion with a college education goes on increasing. Under such circumstances it is likely that more subtle distinctions will operate, including the prestige level of the individual college or university and personality or social status differences.[46]

In other words, as higher education expands to absorb a significant proportion of the population, it becomes *less* useful as an avenue of upward mobility as it becomes more and more a prerequisite merely to *maintain* one's position. The parallels with the diffusion of the secondary schools— graduation from which once guaranteed excellent opportunities, but which is now seen as a bare necessity— are obvious.[47]

Nevertheless, accessibility to higher education is still the key to upward mobility, even if only as a prerequisite. It could be argued that even if the number of 'vacancies' in the skilled professions are limited, and even if the value of a degree has declined in recent years

through 'inflation', the selection and allocation of individuals to those positions which do exist may be based on equal opportunity and merit. The question then becomes one of determining whether or not the massive expansion of higher education in the fifties and sixties also represented an expansion of educational opportunities for the lower and working classes, women, and other disadvantaged groups.

Unfortunately, the answer is 'no'. The evidence for the United States is quite clear that the upper and middle classes still predominate in higher education. Sewell, for example, states that:

> Despite the spectacular increase in the numbers attending college during the past decade, there is no good reason to believe that socioeconomic differentials in opportunity for higher education have altered appreciably.[48]

The proportion of the upper and middle classes attending university had increased as fast, or faster, than the proportion of the total 18-24 age cohort attaining higher education, or, where there has been an actual increase in the percentage of working class students, it has occurred only *after* the demand for places has been met for the upper and middle classes. To quote Leila Sussman:

> The evidence nevertheless is clear that expansion of higher education in the U.S. since 1947 has been associated with some equalization of participation between the manual and non-manual classes. However, this equalization has set in at a point when the participation of the top occupational strata is approaching 100 percent. Project Talent data show that among high school seniors in 1960, 70 percent of the white collar sons and 66 percent of the daughters entered college within a year of their graduation. The percentages for the professional and technical classes were still higher: 83 and 78. Thus the American case is no exception to the rule that substantial room in selective schools is made for the manual strata only after the demand of the non-manual groups has been statisfied.[49]

Some indication of the situation in Canada may be found in a comparison

of educational attainment (as a rough measure of social class) of parents of university students in 1961, 1968, and 1974. Table 2-1 shows the educational attainments of fathers of university students compared with those of the general population for 1961. Here we see that while 29.7 percent of fathers of university students had attained higher education, this was true of only 7.8 percent of the general population. Fathers of university students were four and a half times more likely to have a university degree than were members of the general public. This would seem to indicate that the upper and professional classes were over-represented in universities.[50]

TABLE 2-1

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS IN ARTS AND SCIENCE FACULTIES BY LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF FATHERS, 1961

Highest Level of Education of Parents	Parents of Students	Family Heads Aged 35-65 Years
Elementary School	26.5	53.7
Some High School	24.0	25.8
High School Graduation	19.8	12.8
Some University	9.1	3.2
University Graduation	20.6	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0

SOURCES: D.B.S., *University Student Expenditure and Income in Canada, 1961*, Pt. II (Ottawa, 1963); and *Census of Canada, 1961*, Vol.2.1-9, Table 80. [John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic*, p. 189.]

While not directly comparable with the above, due to slight alterations in categories, the figures for 1968-69 and 1974-75 would seem to indicate a similar predominance of upper and middle class students. In Table 2-2 it can be seen that while in 1971 only 10.1 percent of males had attained university, 24.9 percent of fathers of university students

in 1968-69 had at least some university, and this had risen to 31.6 percent in 1974-75. (An important caution here is that the increase between 1968-69 and 1974-75 is probably due to a general rise in educational attainment of the population, rather than a real increase in the percentage of upper class students.[51]) Thus, it would appear that there has not been a significant decline in the predominance of upper and middle class students at universities in Canada.

TABLE 2-2

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF FATHERS OF FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATES COMPARED WITH THE 45-65 MALE POPULATION, 1968-69 And 1974-75.

Highest Level of Education	Fathers of Full-Time Undergraduates 1968-69	Fathers of Full-Time Undergraduates 1974-75	Males, 45 - 65 1971
Elementary	19.4	18.5	44.2
Some High School	23.9	24.4	N/A
High School Graduate	13.9	15.1	N/A
[Subtotal High School]	[37.8]	[39.4]	[29.6]
Some University	7.4	9.1	4.4
University Graduate	17.5	22.5	5.7
Other	17.9	10.4	16.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

SOURCE: Von Zur-Muehlen, *The Educational Background of Parents of Post-Secondary Students In Canada,* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1978) Tables 11 and 16.

On the basis of the 1968-69 and 1974-75 data, Von Zur-Muehlen concluded that "greater access to higher education has not occurred in universities", and states that:

> Under its cost-sharing programs, the federal government has contributed more than ten billion dollars to higher education since 1967 (or 50% of the operating expenditures). It appears that between 1967-68 and 1974-75, this program benefited the middle and upper classes of Canadian society as much or more than those from the lower-middle and working classes.[52]

On the other hand, there *has* been a significant increase in the proportion of women in the student body. The mix of post-secondary students shifted from 30 percent female in 1962 to 45 percent in 1976.[53] This increase probably represents a real expansion of opportunities for upward occupational mobility for women as a group. One reason women have typically been denied access to the better positions and equal pay is that they have lacked the necessary formal credentials. The traditional values which pictured the woman's place as in the home necessarily interpreted their education beyond the secondary level as consumption, affordable only by the upper and middle-classes. As these values declined and women increasingly entered the working force, their participation in higher education came to be seen as 'investment' consistent with the human capital model. This in turn encouraged their attendance at university and this may eventually lead to a general improvement of women's position in the workforce, with increasingly larger proportions participating at the higher occupation levels.

However, this probably does *not* represent mobility in terms of social class. While more women are attending university, these women tend to be from the upper and middle classes. In fact, the educational attainment levels of their parents (and therefore their social class) is generally *higher* than that of male students.[54] Their improved opportunities for upward occupational mobility resulting from greater access to higher education probably merely allows them to rise to that level of employment consistent with their parent's social class. Whereas women were once expected to accept temporary employment at levels below their station until such a time as they *married* into their social class, it is generally becoming the norm that they achieve their social

class through independent occupational attainment. In other words, the increased participation of women in higher education probably represents a shift in the *means* of maintaining their social class position (that is, a shift from marriage to formal education), rather than any real expansion of opportunities for upward social mobility. While this may prove to be of major significance to the role of women in post-industrial societies and the struggle against sexism, it should not be interpreted as an example of the expansion of higher education leading to increased social mobility.[55]

So far the expansion of higher education has been discussed primarily in terms of the expansion of scale: the increase in the size of the universities and the rise in the participation rates of the 18-24 age cohort. As mentioned previously, however, the expansion of higher education in the fifties and sixties also involved the creation and proliferation of new *types* of programs and institutions. The development of these new technical institutes and community colleges carried with it a number of important implications for social mobility and social stratification.

For many proponents of the community college movement, these new types of higher education offered the best hope for achieving real equality of educational opportunity. For one thing, the financial barrier to further education was considerably reduced with the evolution of community colleges. First, they charged much lower tuition fees than did universities. Second, since they were located in the local community there was no need to board students away from home. Third, their courses were generally shorter: two years for unversity preparation, and terminal programs could be as short as one or two months. This meant that students

did not have to face three to four years of foregone earnings as would be the case at a degree granting college or university. Finally, since many of the community college courses, and all of the technical institute's programs, were vocationally oriented with a demonstrable demand for their graduates, economically disadvantaged students could look forward to an immediate return on their investment. The other major advantage of community colleges was that they were open in their admission requirements, generally accepting less than senior matriculation and/or providing complete programs for upgrading deficient standings. Since it was well known that lower class and disadvantaged minority groups often encounter negotiating passage through the secondary schools, community colleges thus provided an opportunity for higher education that would otherwise have been denied these students.

Of course, the proliferation of community colleges and technical institutions was not based solely upon the desire for greater equality of educational opportunity. The human capital model called for the creation of these new types of higher education in response to the changing manpower requirements of modern industrial society.[56] For example, Claude Bissel argued against junior colleges and for technical schools, evidencing greater concern for economic progress than with accessibility to university through transfer programs:

> Rather than junior colleges we need a network of post-secondary technical institutes that, without neglecting liberal education, would concentrate on specific professional goals. Our economy needs these trained technicians, and our universities need such technical institutes to relieve them of reponsibilities that do not properly belong to them.[57]

The last sentence is also indicative of the belief that the traditional (enlightenment) function of the university as a center of culture

and intellectual development, rather than vocational preparation, should be maintained. Community colleges and technical schools were both seen as providing equality of educational opportunity without threatening the traditional concern of universities with 'excellence'.[58] Universal university attendance would necessarily result in a reduction in standards (similar to that which presumably occurred in high schools when secondary education was opened up) as students of lesser ability, or motivation were permitted access. Furthermore, since traditional university programs were manifestly unsuitable for a majority of school leavers, in terms either of their interest or eventual occupation, universal access to university was deemed undesirable. One way to reconcile this with the desire for universal accessibility to higher education was to create new and separate higher education institutions which could cater to these students' needs.

It is important to emphasize that the approach here was one of 'separate but equal'. It was optimistically suggested that the 'snobbishness' associated with university degrees would decline as the labour market increased rewards for the technical institute and community college vocational graduate, and that these new institutions could achieve excellence in their own fields. To quote John Gardner (then President of the Carnegie Foundation):

> The word *excellence* is all too often reserved for the dozen or two dozen institutions which stand at the very zenith of our higher education.... In these terms it is simply impossible to speak of a junior college, for example, as excellent. Yet sensible men can easily conceive of excellence in a junior college.... The society which scorns excellence in plumbing because plumbing is a humble activity and tolerate shoddiness in philosophy because it is an exalted activity will have neither good plumbing nor good philosophy. Neither its pipes nor its theories will hold water.[59]

While the community college concept did not catch on as fast or to as great an extent in Canada as it did in the United States (it is estimated, for example, that 80 percent of freshmen entering higher education in California do so at a two year community college[60]), it did have an impact in Canada. Community colleges and technical schools were successful in drawing demand for entrance to higher education away from the universities, and may have been partly responsible for the enrolment declines suffered by universities in Canada in the early seventies.[61]

It is also clear that community colleges in Canada were successful in attracting students from lower and working class families. In Table 2-3 it can be seen that roughly twice as many fathers of university students have degrees as fathers of community college students; and that fathers of community college students have only slightly higher educational attainments than the general populace. Over a third of fathers of community college students had only elementary education, as compared to less than a fifth of fathers of university undergraduates. To quote Von Zur-Muehlen:

> A tentative conclusion of this report is that although greater access to higher education has not occurred in universities, it seems to have taken place in the community college sector.[62]

And again:

> If it is true that universities are tending to become perserves of the middle and upper classes, then community college terminal programs may be the sole alternatives available to the less priviledged and as already noted community college students do seem to be drawn from disadvantaged groups.[63]

The question arises, however, whether this should be interpreted as an expansion of educational opportunity through the creation of a new and

TABLE 2-3

Educational Attainment of Fathers of Full-time Community College and Undergraduate Students, Compared with the 45 to 64 Male Population, 1968-69 and 1974-75

Level of Study	Father's Educational Attainment of Full-Time Students (Post-Secondary Student Survey, 1968-69)		Educational Attainment of the 45 to 64 male Population (Labour Force Survey, January, 1969)	Father's Educational Attainment of Full-Time Students (Post-Secondary Student Survey, 1974-75)		Educational Attainment of the 45 to 64 Male Population (Labour Force Survey, April 1975)	Educational Attainment of the 45 to 64 Male Population (Census 1971)
	Community College	Undergraduate		Community College	Undergraduate		
Elementary	32.0	19.4	46.7	29.1	18.5	37.4	44.2
Some Secondary	25.2	23.9	27.0	26.0	24.4	25.3	N/A
Completed Secondary	10.8	13.9	15.3	14.5	15.1	13.5	N/A
Sub-Total Secondary	36.0	37.8	42.4	40.6	39.4	38.8	29.6
Total Elementary and Secondary	68.0	57.2	89.0	69.6	57.9	76.2	73.7
Other Education or Training	19.2	17.9	N/A	11.5	10.4	10.3	9.4
Post-Secondary Non-University	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.5	1.7	2.4	6.7
Some University	4.4	7.4	4.2	5.2	7.5	3.6	4.4
University Degree(s)	8.4	17.5	6.8	11.2	22.5	7.6	5.7
Sub-Total University	12.8	24.9	11.0	16.4	30.0	11.1	10.1
Total Post-Secondary (Trade or Vocational)	N/A	N/A	N/A	18.9	31.7	13.5	16.8
Grand Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number Reported	91,436	208,226	1,870,000	152,071	165,329	2,113,003	1,978,850

SOURCE: Von Zur-Muehlen, *The Educational Background of Parents of Post-Secondary Students In Canada*, (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1978) Table 18, p. 47.

more open type of higher education institution, or as a *restriction* of educational opportunity through the creation of an institution to 'soak off' the demand for higher education places at universities. Are community colleges the key to social mobility, as their proponents suggest, or the key mechanism of social stratification?

In spite of the previously quoted desire to see the differentiation of higher education institutions as 'separate but equal', it is quite clear that these institutions are ranked hierarchically in terms of prestige and social class. At the top are the elite colleges, oriented to the liberal arts for the most part, with a few technical institutes, such as MIT, qualifying for equal prestige; next are the state universities which train the professional classes, followed (at least in the United States) by the four year colleges which provide undergraduate degrees for the middle classes; and at the bottom are the two year community colleges which act as 'screening centers' for the rest of the system, channeling some of its graduates into the degree granting universities and the middle and upper classes, while "cooling out" the educational aspirations of those unsuitable for further education and allocating them to terminal vocational programs and lower-middle class status.[64]

After a persuasive discussion on the stratification of higher education, Edmund Millar provides a summary of the research findings which is worth quoting at length:

> 1. The expanded community college system has fitted into the existing higher education system as its *lowest rung* in terms of tuition, prestige, the social class and ability of its student bodies, teacher loads, financial support from the state, and future pay-off for its students' credentials.

2. The community college system's expansion *has* encouraged more Americans to enter "higher education", including more low-income and minority students. It is also the case, however, that the great majority of *new* minority and low-income student entrants to higher education have been "shunted" to the low-status two-year colleges and a *smaller* percentage of low-income students are gaining first access to four-year public and private colleges than was the case a few years ago. The higher attrition rates of the two year schools have meant that the existence of "massive" community college systems (in California and in the Rocky Mountain Region, for example) has "failed to increase the number of people obtaining bachelor's degrees".

3. The great majority of entering community college students fail to achieve their educational goals. Most entrants hope for eventual achievement of a bachelor's degree— only a small minority achieve this. Many also fail to complete the vocational programs in community colleges, and remedial programs have been very unsuccessful. Dealing with massive, structurally-predestined failure seems to be the most important, though latent, function of the community college, as [Burton] Clarke (1960) pointed out in his case study of "cooling out" at San Jose City College. Clarke stressed the need for this characteristic function to remain hidden from public awareness, and Karabel summarizes the main themes of his own research on community college student achievement thus:

   "That community colleges have a *negative* impact on persistence, that they do *not* increase the number of bachelor's degrees, that they seem to provide the greatest opportunity to transfer (and hence mobility) to *middle* class students— these are all facts which are unknown to their clientele. The community college movement, seemingly a promising extension of equal educational opportunity, in reality marks the extension of a class-based tracking system into higher education and the continuation of a long historical process of educational escalation without real change."

   Trent concludes his survey of heavy attrition rates in community colleges, well-documented in the literature, with the comment: "Community colleges cannot be referred to as open-door colleges without qualification. The evidence is that too often they are revolving door colleges with heavy attrition."

4. A few observers have noted that "the social relations of the (public) junior college classroom," compared with those of other types of public and private college, seem designed to "fit" the less-privileged community

> college students for the "destined" lower places in the work hierarchy.
>
> In summary, it may be said that, "democratization" and "open door" rhetoric notwithstanding, the accumulating research evidence is that the increasing internal differentiation within the higher education system, in which process the community colleges have come to play a central and ever-increasing part, has served largely to increase the class stratification consequences of the system.[65]

Similarly, it has been argued that this process of 'social tracking' occurs within the individual institution as well as between them. Jerome Karabel, for example, enlarged on Burton Clarke's work on the "cooling out" function referred to above, to demonstrate the submerged class conflict between educators who desire to increase the proportion of community college students enroled in terminal vocational programs and the resistance to these efforts on the part of the students. The educators' attempts to raise the prestige of vocational programs and encourage students to enter terminal programs rather than college transfer courses, is an attempt (albeit, not a conscious one) to track students from lower socio-economic backgrounds into more 'appropriate occupations'.[66] The resistance to this process on the part of students and their desire for access to universities and upward mobility is also evident in Canada. In Quebec, for example, the system of "colleges of general and vocational occupation" (CEGEP) encountered difficulties when, "unfortunately for the CEGEP, 75 percent of students elected to take the academic option, whereas the prediction had been that 75 percent would take the vocational programs."[67] Similarly, the distribution of women within university faculties has tended to represent social tracking according to sexist stereotypes:

> In our society education is the key to occupational mobility. One oft-cited reason for the failure of women to gain equality in the marketplace refers to the education

> they obtain. It has been suggested that women do not succeed because the type of education they receive is less marketable than that obtained by men. Women tend to cluster in feminine fields of study, such as the humanities and the social sciences, whereas men tend to opt for science and professional studies, which command higher wages and lead to higher prestige occupations.[68]

Thus, any differentiation within higher education must be viewed, if not with suspicion, at least with caution. The rhetoric of "open admissions" and "expansion of opportunity" tends to obscure the role of these institutions in social stratification and the reproduction of the social order. While it would be quite incorrect to suggest that the expansion of higher education, whether in terms of scale or type of institution, has had no positive impact on opportunities for social mobility, it would be equally naive to accept this 'expansion' of opportunity at face value.

The relevance of all this to the emergence of Athabasca University is, of course, that it represents a *new* type of higher education, and one which is at least partially based on the rhetoric of open admissions. As such, it raises the question of where it belongs in the higher education hierarchy. Is it the newest and *lowest* rung, or does it exist completely outside the traditional structure of higher education? Does it serve a "cooling out" function, and if so, how? What, if any, is its function in social mobility or social stratification?

This could lead to a review of the literature on the Open University in England and the diffusion of the open university/distance education concept(s), but this will be left until Chapter VI, when it may be more fruitfully compared with the emergence of Athabasca University.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1]Mayer Zald, Organizational Change: The Political Economy Of The YMCA, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 9-17.

[2]Ibid., p. 231.

[3]Ibid., pp. 17-24, 230-241.

[4]Cyril Belshaw, Towers Besieged: The Dilemma Of The Creative University, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), p. 11.

[5]John Henry Cardinal Newman, The Idea Of A University, with an introduction by George Shuster (New York: Image Books, 1959), p. 130. Cardinal Newman's book was originally published in 1852.

[6]Francis Bacon, quoted by Clark Kerr, The Uses Of The University, (Cambridge, Massachusettes: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 2.

[7]Cardinal Newman, pp. 171-172.

[8]Ibid., p. 144.

[9]Dr. Copleston, quoted (at length) in Ibid., p. 184.

[10]Davidson, quoted (at length) in The Idea of A University, p. 186.

[11]Theodore Schultz, "Investment In Human Capital", in Power And Ideology In Education, eds. Jerome Karabel and A. H. Halsey, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 313.

[12]Cyril James, University Affairs 1 (October 1959) 5.

[13]Schultz, p. 322; and Karabel and Halsey, pp. 13-15.

[14]Karabel and Halsey, p. 13.

[15]Ibid., p. 13. Italics in original.

[16]Economic Council of Canada, quoted in "Education: Key To Economic Growth", University Affairs 7 (February 1966) 13.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Ibid.

[19]John Deutsch (Economic Council of Canada), University Affairs 8 (February 1967) 2.

[20]Bladen Commission (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada's Commission On Financing Higher Education In Canada), quoted in University Affairs 7 (October 1965) 1.

[21]E. W. R. Steacie, University Affairs 1 (May 1960) 5.

[22]Honourable John Aird, University Affairs 9 (December 1967) 6.

[23]Barry Bluestone, "Economic Theory And The Fate Of The Poor", in Power And Ideology In Education, pp. 337-338.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Alexander Lockhart, "Graduate Unemployment And The Myth Of Human Capital", in Social Space: Canadian Perspectives, eds., D. I. Davies and Kathleen Herman, (Toronto: New Press, 1971), p. 252.

Lockhart's reference to the cancellation of the "Arrow" may not be terribly appropriate, in as much as a number of people maintain that its cancellation was a mistake; that is, that the model may have failed because Canadian political leadership lost faith in the possibility of the development of high technology industries in Canada and abandoned it before the final economic benefits could be realized. (CBC: "There Never Was An Arrow", March 2, 1980.) Nevertheless, the rest of Lockhart's analysis remains convincing.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Economic Council of Canada, Seventh Annual Review, quoted in "Economic Council Says Universities Must Curb Costs", University Affairs 11 (November 1970) 4.

[28]J. F. Leddy, "Individual Needs Come First", University Affairs 12 (July 1971) 5.

[29]There has been one major exception to this in recent years, which must be noted. The Graham report of the Royal Commission On Education, Public Services, and Provincial-Municipal Relations (Nova Scotia, 1974) spent much of the chapter on higher education attacking the human capital model and advocating a return to the enlightenment model: "There are undoubtedly economic benefits to society as well as non-economic benefits; the economic benefits simply appear to not be nearly as high as has sometimes been suggested." It went on to complain of "...society's misplaced preoccupation with academic credentials," and to suggest that university education should be other than mere vocational training. Far from applauding the expansion of the university enrolments in Nova Scotia during the 1960s, it condemned the universities for giving into government pressure to expand and felt that this had led to a decline in standards. "It is unfortunate that many who do not belong, and are uncomfortable as would-be scholars, are forced into university by social and economic pressures." The report recommended that tuition fees rise to cover operating costs because the significant benefits of a degree were thought to accrue to the degree holder, and because "...the argument that economic growth and productivity is closely tied with higher education is now recognized as overstated." ("Graham Report Highly Critical Of Universities", University Affairs 15 (November 1974) 5-6.

It is difficult to assess how influential the Graham Report was, but it seems probable that most other higher education administrators were less than enthusiastic in their revival of the enlightenment model, since this would necessarily have implied even further drastic reductions in government subsidies.

[30]For example, in a report prepared by John Buttrick for the Ontario Economic Council and released February 1978, the recommendation was made that tuition fees be allowed to rise to the point where they covered nearly the full cost of teaching:

> I find the case for subsidization of post-secondary education to be very weak, except for research and public service components....
>
> Insofar as post-secondary institutions provide for faculty and students what are called consumption activities, the answer [to 'should subsidies continue'] as far as net tuition fees is concerned would be "no".
>
> But colleges and universities do perform socially useful research and public services and do teach skills which sometimes benefit people other than the recipients. Therefore, socially legitimate grounds do exist for subsidization."

["Let Tuition Fees Rise To Cover Costs....", University Affairs 19 (February 1978) 10.]

Even under the manpower model, though, there is usually some (implicit) acknowledgement that there are some indirect benefits which presumably result from having a 'culturally literate' populace. For example, a region without sufficient higher education opportunities might have difficulty in attracting or retaining the best corporate managers for their industries as these people would desire university education for their children, yet such variables are not easy to recognize, let alone measure.

[31]For example, J. Ben-David ["Professions In The Class System Of Present-Day Societies", Current Sociology 12 (1963-64) p. 275] described higher education under the enlightenment model:

> University education was a matter of luxury, part of the way of life of the upper classes. Originally the clergy was the only profession for which people were trained at universities. Higher civil service and secondary school teaching were added during the second part of the last century. All these professions, or important parts of them, were closely connected to the upper class, or were upper class callings.

[32]W. G. Fleming, Educational Opportunity: The Pursuit of Equality Critical Issues In Canadian Higher Education Series, ed. Alan King, (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Ltd., 1974), p. 39.

[33]Robert Pike, Who Doesn't Get To University...And Why (Ottawa: Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 1970), pp. 2-3.

[34]See, for example, Schultz.

[35]Ibid; and Karabel and Halsey, pp. 308-309.

[36]To quote James Davis:

> ...in the last half of the twentieth century American system of higher education is coming to be the single most strategic determinant of the life-chances of the nation's young men. [James Davis, "Higher Education: Selection and Opportunity", The School Review 71: 265, quoted by Edmund Millar, Big City Elites And Educational Stratification, p. 13.]

[37]Karabel and Halsey, p. 309.

[38]Olive Banks, The Sociology Of Education, 2nd ed., (Toronto: Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1971), p. 13.

[39]Ibid., pp. 34-35. Robert Havinghurst is quoted from "Education And Social Mobility In Four Societies", in Halsey, Floud, and Anderson, eds., Education, Economy, And Society.

[40]Robert Pike, "Enrolment And Accessibility: Retrospect And Prospect" University Affairs 14 (November 1973) 2.

[41]Banks, p. 37.

[42]Ibid., p. 37, 13-14. See also, Martin Oppenheimer, "What Is The New Working Class", New Politics 10 (Fall 1972).

[43]Banks, pp. 37-39.

[44]John Porter, The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class And Power In Canada, Studies In The Structures Of Power: Decision Making In Canada series, ed. John Meisel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), pp. 49-54.

[45]See, for example, Chapter II, pages 20-21.

[46]Banks, p. 39; footnotes deleted from the passage.

[47]See Ivar Berg, Education And Jobs: The Great Training Robbery, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), and Jerome Karabel, "Community Colleges And Social Stratification", in Karabel and Halsey, pp. 232-235, for example.

[48]W. H. Sewell, "Inequality Of Opportunity For Higher Education", American Sociological Review 36 (1971) quoted by Edmund Millar, Big City Elites And Educational Stratification, p. 14.

[49]Leila, Sussman, quoted by Millar, pp. 14-15.

[50]Porter included in his discussion of social class and higher education some interesting figures for 1956. 25.7 percent of parents of university students were "proprietors and managers" and 24.9 percent were "professionals", that is, over half of the student population in 1956 could be considered to come from upper class backgrounds! (Porter, p. 184.)

[51]On the other hand, it might. To quote Pike:

> ...it does not take too much sociological imagination to predict that any major turning-away from full-time studies by high school students would be particularly apparent amongst the members of those social groups that have always confronted severe material and psychological barriers to full participation in university education. Thus, any substantial decline in the enrolment of eligible high school leavers, unless balanced by a corresponding increase in the enrolment of those who have been out of high school for a year or two, might well be accompanied by a reversal of the limited progress made toward social democratization in access to full-time degree studies that occurred during the 1960s. (Pike, "Enrolment", p. 3.)

[52]Von Zur-Muehlen, The Educational Background Of Parents Of Post-Secondary Students In Canda, (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1978), p. 56.

[53]Statistics Canada, From The Sixties To The Eighties: A Statistical Portrait Of Canadian Higher Education (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1979) p. 14.

[54]Von Zur-Muehlen.

[55]As an aside, it is interesting to note that the percentage of female students in higher education was roughly the same in the 1920s as the peak it reached in the early 1970s. Since higher education was viewed as primarily conspicuous consumption during that period, it did not matter greatly what sex one happened to be. It was only as higher education came to be seen as an investment in the labour force, along with the attitude that women should not normally enter the working force, that males tended to so completely dominate attendance. However, whether it is the decline of the human capital model or the decline of sexism which is responsible for this latest return to balance, is hard to say.

[56]See, for example, Karabel, p. 233; "Community Colleges Offer Route To Higher Education", University Affairs 11 (1969) 10; and Millar.

[57]Claude Bissel, University Affairs 4 (October 1962) 7.

[58]Karabel, pp. 233-234.

[59]John Gardner, University Affairs 3 (February 1960)

[60]Karabel, p. 233.

[61]Interview with Walter Worth, Dean of Education, University of Alberta, and former Deputy Minister of Advanced Education and Manpower, Province of Alberta.

[62]Von Zur-Muehlen, p. 56.

[63]Ibid., p. 36.

[64]Burton Clark, "The Coming Shape Of Higher Education In The United States", International Journal Of Comparative Sociology 2 (September 1961) 209, quoted by Millar, p. 27.

[65]Millar, Big City Elites And Educational Stratification: Business/-Upper Class Power In Creating A Community College For Cleveland, 1950-1970.

[66]Karabel.

[67]University Affairs, 10 (February 1969).

[68]Gladys Symons, "Can Women Translate Education Into Occupational Mobility?" University Affairs 19 (July 1978) 17.

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM: ISSUES IN CANADIAN HIGHER EDUCATION, 1959 TO 1979

This chapter will attempt to outline the main issues in Canadian higher education as perceived by university and government administrators, and their responses to these issues, over the past twenty years.[1] This is necessary in order to place the emergence of Athabasca University, and more especially of its 'innovative' aspects, in an historical perspective. It will be the contention of this thesis that the creation of Athabasca University and its subsequent adoption of the open university model, represented the culmination of a number of local trends and developments, and that the details of its organization reflected the then current concerns of administrators. Without a thorough knowledge of the historical context of these developments, a casual observer might incorrectly conclude that Athabasca University represented a dramatic departure from accepted Canadian educational practice and the importation of a foreign—and perhaps inappropriate—model.

THE EXPANSION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN CANADA, 1959-1970

Unquestionably, the most significant theme in Canadian higher education in the sixties was the massive expansion of both the scale and the type of institution involved in post-secondary education. Full-time university enrolment nearly tripled in the ten year period between 1959-60 and 1969-70, from 101,934 to 298,450.[2] The average

enrolment increases during the sixties was an impressive 11%-12% per year.[3] Table 3-1 gives the enrolment figures for full-time university students in Canada from 1959 to 1970.

TABLE 3-1

FULL-TIME UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
1959 TO 1970

Year	Students	Year	Students
1959	101,934	1965	205,888
1960	113,864	1966	232,672
1961	128,894	1967	261,207
1962	141,388	1968	270,093
1963	158,388	1969	298,450
1964	178,238	1970	308,253

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, *Survey of Higher Education* (later: *Fall Enrolments at Universities and Colleges*).
NOTE: These figures are for fall enrolments.

A number of factors were responsible for this continuous increase in post-secondary enrolments during the sixties. The most obvious was the post-war baby boom which resulted in an 87% increase in the size of the source population, the 18-24 age group between 1961 and 1978.[4] In addition to this increase in the *number* of 18-24 year olds, however, there was also a dramatic increase in the *proportion* of 18-24 year olds attending post-secondary institutions. Whereas only 7.6% of the relevant age group enroled in post-secondary education in 1957-58, 16.1% were enroled in 1967-68.[5] This in turn was a reflection of the increase in the retention rates at the secondary school level. The retention rate, which relates Grade 11 enrolment in a particular year to the Grade 2 enrolment nine years earlier, went from 51% in 1960-61 to 72%

in 1967-68.[6] As the completion of secondary education is generally a prerequisite for admission to post-secondary institutions, this increase in the proportion completing high school represents an increase in the proportion of the 18-24 age group eligible for post-secondary education.

Underlying the rising retention rates and the subsequent increases in the proportion of the population attending post-secondary education, however, is the more basic factor of the acceptance of formal education as the key to occupational attainment and social mobility. The human capital model, as discussed in the previous chapter, encouraged the educational aspirations of students and their parents by relating potential earnings to years of formal education completed. More students remained in high school to complete matriculation, and more high school graduates went on to post-secondary education, because they believed that their life-chances would thereby be improved. As more students attained high school graduation, the Grade 12 diploma underwent inflation and devaluation on the labour market, thereby encouraging students to attain still higher levels of education. Thus, the demand for post-secondary education rose significantly.

Closely related to the increase in post-secondary enrolments was the expansion of higher education programs. New campuses were created to accommodate the rising number of students, and established institutions expanded their facilities and course offerings. Specialized programs, particularly at the post-graduate level, which had previously been restricted to one or two campuses often became readily available across Canada as each university attempted to offer a complete range of degree programs. This in turn stimulated further demand for higher

education as the resulting increase in accessibility to these programs encouraged more people to seek admission to them.

In addition to the increased *number* of institutions and programs, however, the *type* of higher education available was also greatly expanded. Instead of just universities, post-secondary education came to include a variety of technical institutes and community colleges. In fact, while universities may have undergone greater expansion in terms of absolute numbers, the technical institutes and community colleges experienced greater relative growth.[7] Table 3-2 shows that attendance at technical schools and community colleges in Canada has increased more than ten-fold in the past twenty years, while the number enroled in career programs (that is terminal vocational, rather than university transfer courses) has increased more than twenty-fold.

This dramatic expansion of post-secondary vocational education has generally been seen as a result of the changing manpower requirements of the modern Canadian economy. The human capital model predicted an increasing demand for skilled workers and technicians, but in the 1960's it became evident that Canada was not producing enough technical school graduates to meet this demand. From 1955 to 1960, for example, Canada "actually imported more skilled and semi-skilled workers as immigrants than were turned out from all Canadian vocational and technical programs combined."[8] At the same time, employers were beginning to place greater emphasis on formal vocational education as the major form of career preparation and advancement, as the technological sophistication of the economy required workers trained to a level which could no longer be easily provided through on-the-job training. Consequently, increasingly large numbers of high school

TABLE 3-2

FULL-TIME ENROLMENT AT TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES, 1960 TO 1978

Year	Technical Institutes & Community Colleges	Vocational & Career Programs	Year	Technical Institutes & Community Colleges	Vocational & Career Programs
	(Thousands of students)			(Thousands of students)	
1960	11.6	9.4	1970	135.1	86.9
1961	22.8*	11.2	1971	150.7	95.9
1962	27.0	11.6	1972	173.2	110.0
1963	26.9	14.5	1973	194.2	125.7
1964	28.9	20.1	1974	204.3	132.0
1965	39.9	23.1	1975	215.3	140.4
1966	47.2	31.0	1976	222.2	145.6
1967	64.2	42.8	1977	235.1	152.7
1968	----**	53.4	1978	242.3	161.2
1969	106.0	69.1			

SOURCES: Zoltan Zsigmond and C.J.Wenaas, *Enrolment In Educational Institutions By Province, 1951-52 To 1980-81*, Table 3-6, p. 30, and Statistics Canada, *Survey of Vocational Education and Training* (later: *Vocational and Technical Training*), and *Enrolment In Community Colleges*.

NOTES: These figures are for fall enrolments, and do not include enrolments in teacher colleges or schools of nursing. The figures for career programs do not include students in preparatory courses.

*The jump between 1960 and 1961 was due primarily to a change in classifications.

**1968-69 came after the study by Zsigmond and Wenaas, and before the first community college survey by Statistics Canada, so there is no figure readily available for this year. Edward Sheffield, "The Post-War Surge in Post-Secondary Education: 1945-1969", *Canadian Education: A History*, ed. Wilson, Stamp, Audet, p. 426 states that there were "an estimated 80,000" full-time students in community colleges and technical schools in 1968-69.

graduates seek post-secondary vocational training in order to have access to suitable employment.[9] Thus, the expansion of these technical institutes and community colleges can be seen as a response to both the demand of the industrial sector for graduates and the demand of students for post-secondary training.[10]

The federal response to this demand was the "Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act" of December, 1960, which provided 75% of the capital expenditures and 50% of the operating costs for these new post-secondary facilities. The provinces lost little time in taking advantage of this federal assistance and the number of students enroled in such courses rose from 8,330 in 1959-60 to 42,881 in 1967-68, when the Act expired. Ontario established a network of twenty colleges of applied arts and technology (CAATs) in the late sixties, while Quebec set up 30 general and vocational colleges (college d'enseignement general et professional, or CEGEPs). The latter offered both two year university transfer courses and three year terminal vocational training, while the CAATs offered only vocational preparation, though provision was made for graduates with excellent records to receive appropriate credit for university admission. Other provinces made similar arrangements on a slightly smaller scale, such as Alberta's establishment of two institutes of technology and a number of junior colleges.[11]

These increased opportunities for post-secondary education provided by the development of a community college system in turn encouraged further demand for post-secondary education on the part of students. The more facilities there were, the more graduates; the more graduates, the more employers tended to rely upon formal qualifications when hiring new employees; the greater the reliance on formal credentials,

the greater the demand for access to post-secondary institutions. This escalating spiral of educational aspirations was both expected and seen as desirable under the human capital model, since an expanding technological economy was assumed to require increasingly high levels of formal educational attainment from its labour force.[12]

The spectacular expansion of higher education in the sixties should not, however, be seen as the 'inevitable' result of demographic or economic changes. While these were obviously important, the role of the human capital model, that is, its influence on social policy during the 1950's and 1960's, should also be emphasized.

First, the human capital model encouraged governments and higher education institutions to meet the escalating demand for post-secondary education. The model, as espoused by such agencies as the Economic Council of Canada, stated that modern industrial societies require a highly trained labour force, and promoted expenditure on higher education as investment in human capital. This is highly significant. The mere fact that there was a dramatic increase in the number of *potential* post-secondary students, does not necessarily imply that all those eligible must be accommodated. Governments and universities could have responded by sharply raising entrance requirements, raising tuition fees, or otherwise restricting access to higher education so as to retain previous enrolment levels. Instead, administrators tended to take for granted that the demand *must* be met, quoting the human capital model and populist democratic sentiment to support this position.[13]

Second, the human capital model encouraged the diversification of higher education by emphasizing the need for post-secondary technical training, thus greatly expanding the number and type of occupations

requiring formal education beyond high school. Where once higher education had been perceived as suitable only for scholars, and leaders in government and industry, it was now advocated for plumbers and construction workers. Higher education was no longer seen primarily in terms of the 'cultural and intellectual enrichment' of the individual, as it had been under the enlightenment model, but rather as vocational preparation. This change in attitude towards the function of higher education was as much responsible for its expansion as was the economic need for skilled labour.

Third, the human capital model predicted that the expansion of higher education, in terms both of enrolments and the type of programs available, would continue. More and more people would need more and more education as the technological sophistication of the economy and the complexity of human knowledge increased. Economic progress would continue to create additional professional positions while eliminating the need (and therefore the opportunities) for unskilled labour. This view was reinforced by the fact that while the participation rate of the 18-24 year olds in higher education had more than doubled in Canada, it was still significantly below that in the United States.[14] Furthermore, every projection of future enrolments in the fifties and early sixties had consistantly underestimated actual university attendance. For example, Sheffield in his 1955 projections estimated that there would be 128,900 university students by 1964-65. In 1957, Dube raised this estimate to 133,200. Sheffield raised it again in 1959 to 149,000, and yet again in 1961 to 166,300. The actual figure for 1964-65 was 178,238.[15] No matter how extravagant they thought their projections to be, the reality always seemed to surpass their wildest expectations.

Small wonder, then, that the Economic Council of Canada in March, 1970, was projecting 750,000 university students by 1980-81, and a total post-secondary attendance of over one million.[16] They were quite wrong of course, as will be discussed later in this chapter, but the important point here is that economists and educators alike saw the expansion of higher education as *inevitable*. The question was not one of whether post-secondary education *should* expand, but rather, what to do when it did.

It should be mentioned, if only in passing, that such views were obviously also in the best interest of the educational administrators who held them. The expansion of higher education conceivably meant the expansion of their own administrations, and of opportunities for advancement. While it would not do to make too much of such 'vested interests', there is a tendency for bureaucracies to believe in and desire their own growth. The teachers at colleges often hope that their institution will be upgraded to university status, while universities wish to expand into graduate studies and add new faculties. Course groups in faculties aspire to department status, while departments occasionally hope to become separate faculties. Such ambitions may not have been a major factor in the expansion of higher education, but they are likely to predispose educators to the human capital model and a somewhat uncritical acceptance of the need for more post-secondary graduates.

In any event, during the late fifties and early sixties, the major preoccupation of administrators in higher education was with the coming crisis of exploding enrolments as the leading waves of the baby boom bore down on them. Their major concern was to be able to provide the

facilities necessary to accommodate the huge numbers of new students who would soon be demanding admission. Governments and the general public had to be made aware of the need for substantial increases in the level of financial support to universities. Programs had to be planned, staff hired, physical plants designed and built, students screened and selected, and so on, while still managing the normal daily affairs of the institution. It was an immense task, and it is to the credit of university administrators that it was accomplished with as little disruption as there was. It was with justifiable pride that University Affairs, in its February 1964 issue, pointed out that in spite of continuous enrolment increases, "...there are still places in university for students who meet minimum admission requirements...", if not always in the program of their first choice.[17]

By the mid-sixties, however, educators began to realize that this rapid growth had itself wrought changes in the nature of higher education. Universities had undergone a transition from elite to mass institutions.[18] As the higher education community became accustomed to increasing enrolments such that it was no longer an issue in itself, a whole series of secondary concerns came to the fore.

One of the first to emerge was the provincial encroachment on the traditional autonomy of the university. Since the expansion of higher education had necessarily required a rapidly increasing financial commitment on the part of governments, and since education is a provincial responsibility in Canada, the provincial governments naturally wanted some say in how their generous funding was spent. This was particularly the case as regards the duplication of programs at various campuses within a province. The provincial governments argued, not

unreasonably, that a provincial *system* of higher education was necessary for the efficient and effective use of public funds in higher education. While this necessarily required that the universities surrender a portion of their autonomy, either to some sort of Universities Commission or directly to the Department of Education, it seemed a suitable and desirable measure to ensure the effective co-ordination of effort between institutions.

Furthermore, the expansion of higher education was at least partly premised on the human capital model, as has been previously discussed, and this provided an ideological basis for provincial interference. As long as universities had operated under an enlightenment model, they could claim a monopoly on the right to decide what constituted appropriate training for cultural and intellectual growth. The human capital model, however, justified the public expenditures on higher education as investment in human capital, and emphasized the vocational relevance of higher education. Once the human capital model began to dominate university administration, governments could claim an equal knowledge of what sort of training was appropriate for the professional preparation of the graduates in which they had invested, and probably a much surer knowledge of the manpower requirements of the economy. In other words, while society might not tolerate much government tampering with the cultural mission of the universities under the enlightenment model, government co-ordination of vocational preparation under the human capital model seemed much less sinister a threat, and quite justified in view of the growing public investment in higher education.

Thus by October 1964, Edward Sheffield was able to observe that "the most striking trend of the year was towards provincialism in the

organization of higher education", and that "as a result, universities were being influenced increasingly to think of their administration in a provincial context."[19] Ontario established a Department of University Affairs in the same year, and Nova Scotia, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Prince Edward Island all had some form of post-secondary or university commission by 1966.[20] Since then, institutional autonomy has continued to erode as provincial control has steadily increased.[21]

A second, related issue was a growing concern over university administrative structure. The rapid expansion of university enrolments placed a severe strain on the traditional administrative arrangements, simply because these were not designed (or rather, evolved) for mass institutions.[22] Furthermore, the growing provincial control over the finances of the universities steadily eroded the formerly central role of the lay board. Where once the presence of clergy and leading businessmen on these boards clearly reflected the role of the church and business in financing universities, this was now something of an anachronism. Faculty representation on the board was being demanded at a growing number of universities, as was student representation on the senate. There was also a demand for the general 'democratization' of the administrative structure, such that appointment of department heads, deans, and so on, would be made in consultation with faculty members (and possibly students) and would be for a fixed and shorter term of office, so that more faculty members would be able to participate in administrative positions.

The issues of administrative reform came to a head in March 1966 with publication of the Duff-Berdahl Commission's report on university governance in Canada.[23] Within two years, largely as a result of its

recommendations, thirteen universities had added faculty representation to their boards, eight had direct student representation on their senates, and many universities had introduced general reforms.[24] However, the concern with administrative reform remained as an important theme in higher education into the early seventies.

The third issue to emerge in the sixties was student unrest. Student protest in Canada was partly the result of exploding enrolments (which meant not only more students to hold protests, but also a greater degree of alienation to protest about), and partly an overflow from student protest in the United States. Radical student organizations, such as the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA), tended to adopt the revolutionary rhetoric of the American SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) movement.[25] Protest was generally focused against involvement in the war in Viet Nam, and on the lack of a student voice in university affairs, both of which issues were more relevant to the larger and often militarized (in terms of research) American campuses. While less widespread and generally less violent than in the United States, student unrest in Canada had a similar impact, partly because administrators were equally aware of the American experience, so that the Canadian student movement benefitted from gains made in the United States, and partly because Canadian universities had *already* initiated a process of internal reform.[26]

Student protest reached its peak in Canada in 1968, with major confrontations at Simon Fraser University and the Univesity of Toronto, and the publication of a series of radical resolutions at the annual conference of the Canadian Union of Students (CUS).[27] Some universities made an issue out of the collection of compulsory student union fees at

registration, thereby threatening the unions' financial stability, but that was generally resolved in favour of collection.[28] The most effective protest was in Quebec in September 1968, when student strikes closed down nearly half of the CEGEPs to draw attention to the lack of university places for graduates of the academic programs or jobs for the vocational graduates. The government responded by rushing l'Universite du Quebec into operation for 1969, to solve the first problem, though there was not a great deal it could do immediately about the second.[29]

While student unrest remained of concern into the early seventies, the CUS collasped in October 1969, and its successor, the National Union of Students (NUS, founded in 1973), was conspicuously non-political.[30] The provision of student representation on senates, and in some cases boards as well, tended to defuse much of the protest, but for the most part the movement simply faded away through inertia.[31]

A fourth theme to emerge in the sixties, and one underlying both administrative reform and student protest, was the need for a redefinition of the university's role. The massive increase in the scale of universities during the 1960s represented "institutional growth so great that it often amounted to institutional transformation."[32] As it became recognized that growth had wrought changes in function as well as merely size, administrators, educators, governments, and students all began to question just what the function of higher education *should* be.

This issue also peaked in the late sixties, as administrators struggled with reforms and student protest reached its height. During this period University Affairs regularly carried articles with titles such as "Which Ends Do Canadian Universities Serve? CUS Asks" or

the theme of the 1968 annual conference of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada was "the Nature of Contemporary Universities".[33] To quote one such article, "...Canadian universities seem to have decided that the proper study of the university community is the university. Almost every university has some commission on some aspect of the nature of the university."[34]

The debate over the university's role was generally between proponents of the enlightenment model and those of the human capital model, though certain student activists criticized both models as part of a general condemnation of capitalist society.[35] The university's traditional function (under the enlightenment model) of educating the elite was being steadily eroded as (a) the percentage of the population participating in higher education more than doubled, and (b) the university curriculum expanded into more specifically vocational programs and away from pure liberal arts. The inexorable vocationalization of university training which necessarily accompanied increasing government investment in higher education, clearly threatened traditional university values of 'learning for its own sake'.

Again, the issue was not resolved so much as simply exhausted. As reforms were completed and student protest faded away, the concern with a redefinition of the University's role was superseded by other, more immediate issues.

A fifth problem created by the expanding enrolments was the difficulty in obtaining sufficient numbers of academic staff. Because enrolments were increasing faster than Canadian graduate departments could produce qualified teachers, professors had to be imported from the United States, the United Kingdom, and other countries. This

inevitably led to a concern over the lack of both Canadian professors and Canadian content on Canadian campuses.

The initial response of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada was "Project Retrieval", a program to attract Canadian academics who had emigrated back to Canada.[36] While the program was reasonably successful, there were some complaints that Canadian universities tended to *prefer* foreign graduates (particularly American and British) either out of a national inferiority complex, or because the particular department was already dominated by foreign trained professors who favoured their fellow alumni.[37]

The issue of Canadianization in the sixties was primarily centered around the need to produce more Canadian professors (and therefore to expand graduate programs) and the need to keep what qualified Canadians there were in Canada. This tied in very nicely with the human capital model and the principle of 'investment' in post-graduate studies. The general response to the Canadianization issue, then, was to push even harder and more successfully for the expansion of graduate programs.

Another theme to emerge as a result of the expansion of higher education was a renewed interest in pedagogical innovation.[38] First, the establishment of new campuses provided an opportunity to experiment with new administrative arrangements, to recruit innovative staffs, or otherwise 'start afresh'. Second, the expansion of higher education into new types of programs required an innovative response to the new curriculum. Third, rising enrolments and the shortage of qualified instructors meant that student/teacher ratios were constantly rising, and new teaching methods were needed to meet this challenge. Fourth, the wider recruitment of university students meant that they were

entering courses with a much greater diversity of educational background and preparation, which put pressure on traditional curriculum design and teaching methods. Finally, as suggested earlier, the expanding number of students placed strain on traditional administrative structures (and university facilities) and innovative responses, such as year-round operation, new semester systems, and new registration procedures, were required to meet the situation.

The response was generally one of openness to innovation, particularly since the government seemed willing to finance expensive experiments such as the use of closed-circuit television, language laboratories and computer-assisted learning.

Finally, another theme which was important in the 1960s was the debate over the federal role in higher education. The federal government had been providing steadily increasing financial assistance to universities throughout Canada, and, as was discussed above, provided the major portion of the funding for the expansion of higher education into technical and vocational programs and institutes. While grateful for this financial support, the Provinces had some difficulty reconciling this heavy federal involvement with the fact that education was a provincial responsibility. Ultimately, the federal government was forced to withdraw from direct funding of universities by Quebec's insistence, at the 1965 Federal-Provincial Conference, that this was an intolerable intrusion in provincial affairs. Instead, the federal government surrendered four points of personal income tax and one point of corporation tax to the provinces, an amount equal to or greater than that formerly provided to the universities, but without any conditions attached on how the provinces could spend it.[39] This was the only major

issue in the sixties which was not directly the result of the expansion of higher education (except, perhaps, that the growing scale of the federal commitment made it more conspicuous) and which is of no direct relevance to the emergence of Athabasca University.

In summary, then, the major development during the 1960s was the expansion of higher education, in terms both of enrolment and type of institution. The rising enrolments were the result of an increase in the size of the source population (the 18-24 age cohort) and an increase in the participation rate. This increase in the participation rate was due to a belief in the human capital model on the part of students (or their parents) who felt that their life chances would be significantly improved by attainment of higher education. The human capital model also encouraged governments and institutions to respond to this increased demand by providing as many student places as possible, and by expanding the type of higher education available.

Once the continual expansion of higher education was taken for granted, a number of secondary issues resulting from this expansion came to the fore. These included the emergence of provincial *systems* of higher education, administrative reforms, student unrest, attempts at a redefinition of the role of the university, concern with Canadianization, and innovation.

Most issues of that decade, then, were premised on the belief that higher education would continue to expand at least until the late 1980s when there would be a decline in the source population as the last of the baby boom graduated, and even then, there might still be further increases in the participation rates to offset this potential decline.

This was not, however, to be the case.

ENROLMENT SLOWDOWNS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES, 1970-1979

During the early seventies there was a sudden—and to some minds, inexplicable—leveling off of enrolments. Table 3-3 gives the enrolment figures for full-time university students for 1967 to 1978.

TABLE 3-3

FULL-TIME UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
1968 TO 1978

Year	Students	Year	Students
1967	261,207	1973	325,161
1968	270,293	1974	339,073
1969	298,450	1975	363,188
1970	308,253	1976	369,273
1971	304,371	1977	366,860
1972	311,657	1978	360,176

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, *Fall Enrolments At Universities & Colleges.*

The preliminary figure for 1979-80 is 364,781 full-time university students.[40] As can be seen from Table 3-3, there was an actual *decline* in enrolments nationally in 1971-72, and the figure was nearly *90,000* students short of the Economic Council of Canada's projection made only eighteen months before![41]

As suggested earlier in the chapter, after nearly fifteen years of consistently underestimating future university enrolments, it was rather a shock to educators to discover that enrolments for the seventies had been seriously *over*-estimated. It was not that enrolments failed to increase (for the 1971 decline was slight and only temporary) but that

they failed to increase as fast or as much as had been anticipated.

This leveling off of enrolments was due primarily to graduate unemployment and a general disillusionment with university's ability to guarantee access to 'the good life'. For example, the April 1971 issue of University Affairs painted a gloomy picture of professional level employment under the headline, "Jobs For Professionals Drop 30% In One Year":

> Accountants, engineers, scientists, and other professionals are having as much trouble finding positions as blue-collar workers.... Jobs for such professionals plummeted 30% in the last year, while job hunters have increased 17%....
>
> The Atlantic provinces and the Prairies had the largest decreases—82% and 40% respectively....
>
> Recent MSc's and PhD's in engineering and science are little in demand while recent graduates in arts are in oversupply. Industrial opportunities are limited for experienced architects, architectural draftsmen, aeronautical engineers, junior civil engineers, civil technologists, tool designers, foresters, geophysicists, biologists, petroleum engineers, agricultural engineers, technical illustrators, operations research analysts, soils engineers, lawyers, advertising men, purchasing agents and personnel trainees. One 1970 agricultural engineering graduate in Vancouver is selling typewriters because of his inability to find a professional position. Others, particularly in the Prairies and Maritimes, are out of work.[42]

Faced with such dismal employment opportunities upon graduation, the potential university student must necessarily ask himself if he really wishes to undertake a difficult and expensive course of studies in order to 'sell typewriters'. Students who must borrow to continue their studies would naturally be more reluctant to do so if high paying employment was not likely to be immediately available upon graduation. Furthermore, there began, in 1968, to be serious problems with student summer unemployment, placing additional financial pressure on many students.[43] These finacial considerations tended to discourage the further diffusion of

university education downward through the social structure, and thus effectively blocked any further spectacular increases in the participation rates.

It should be noted that while a number of writers imply that the disillusionment with university's ability to guarantee 'the good life' was a general phenomenon, this was probably not the case. The upper and educated middle classes undoubtedly still took university education for their children for granted. Even a number of lower-middle class families must still have believed in university education, for enrolments did continue to rise slowly. What changed was the ability of the human capital model (the belief of families in the connection between education and income) to recruit *new, nontraditional* students to the universities, at the same accelerating rate as it had previously. Marginal (in terms of social class, finances, or academic standing) potential students who might formerly have been successfully recruited by appeals to future earning power, could no longer be enticed to register in view of graduate unemployment or underemployment.

A second, though much less significant factor, was a slight swing away from university to non-university post-secondary education. Enrolments at technical institutes and community colleges, as shown in Table 3-2, continued to rise steadily throughout the seventies and they experienced little difficulty with graduate unemployment. Here too, however, the growth was much slower and more limited than had been projected.[44]

The failure of university enrolments to continue to expand at the anticipated spectacular rate forced educators to re-examine the human capital model, upon which much of their thinking in the sixties had been

premised. Educators had assumed that the demand for university places would continue to rise because the human capital model was based on the assumption that the modern industrial economy would continue to expand indefinitely (or at least for the foreseeable future), thus requiring an increasing number of graduates. However, this had now been proven not to be the case. The oversupply of graduates was not limited to one or two fields, the result of a fluke overproduction of a particular specialty, but was rather a general inability of the economy to further increase the percentage of professional jobs. The enrolment slowdown was smymptomatic of the fact that university graduates had reached a 'saturation' level in the economy. The recognition of this fact brought into question the human capital model's assumptions that (a) the economic expansion and 'progress' of modern societies would continue unabated (as opposed to some concept of a 'steady state' economy), and that (b) *any* investment in human capital through education would *automatically* and *inevitably* lead to further economic growth and income redistribution.

Of course, there was also the problem that as the baby boom entered the labour market the economy was hard pressed to create enough new jobs at *any* level, but whereas the better trained worker had formerly been easier to place, this was manifestly no longer the case.[45] Nevertheless, the initial response to graduate unemployment was often to advise the student to return to university for further training at the post-graduate or post-doctoral levels. It was eventually recognized, however, that this merely postponed the difficulty, rather than solved it. The problem was not that they lacked training at a sufficiently advanced level, but that the economy could not absorb any further increases in the percentage of professionals.

Furthermore, the surplus of unemployed graduates led many administrators to question the wisdom of allowing enrolments to expand in fields for which there was no demand for graduates, even though there may have been a demand for admission on the part of students. To quote but one example, the December 1975 issue of University Affairs carried a story under the headline "Economy Cannot Support Too Many Artists" in which the director of the Canada Council, André Fortier stated that:

> What seems to be happening, in Canada at least, is that we shall soon be developing young artists in our fine arts faculties on a scale (and at a cost) that our economy cannot support. We are helping to professionalize creative talent, but we are sending these new professionals out into a market that in many instances simply isn't there. ...we may find ourselves faced with a number of unpleasant consequences—such as rationiong the number of people who may enter schools of art, pressing artists to accept uncongenial employment in fields other than their own, or being confronted with large numbers of unemployed, frustrated, alienated artists who, instead of contributing to the quality of life will only add to the many problems of our society.[46]

Whereas previously faculties had been encouraged to expand as fast as the demand for admission (that is, enrolments) rose, they were now encouraged to resist this pressure, and to expand only as quickly as the demand for their *graduates* rose. In other words, since the demand for graduates was no longer taken for granted (as it had been under the human capital model), the expansion of higher education was to be determined by output demand rather than input demand. It is somewhat ironic that the first time administrators questioned the desirability of invariably accommodating input demands, was the very time that this demand was starting to level off.[47]

This shift from the assumption that the economy required and could absorb as many graduates as higher education could produce to a greater

emphasis on producing only those graduates for which there could be shown a need, is a basic difference between the human capital model and the manpower model. It should be noted that while the enrolment slowdowns and the rising graduate un(der)employment dealt a serious blow to the human capital model, there was no question of a return to the enlightenment model,[48] nor was there a wholesale rejection of the 'investment' orientation in favour of a radically different model or ideology. While distinct, the manpower model nevertheless shares many of the human capital model's basic premises: government funding of higher education was still premised primarily on the belief that this was an 'investment' in the nation's human captial, and that the purpose of higher education was to a great extent vocational preparation.

The first and immediate result of graduate unemployment and enrolment slowdowns was a renewed concern over finance. Finance had, of course, been of central interest in the sixties as well, since the expansion of higher education had entailed rapidly escalating costs, but now there was the added question of whether these costs were justifiable. If there was no need for additional graduates and there were no futher enrolment increases, on what possible grounds could universities ask for additional funding? The answer seemed to be that universities ought *not* to undergo further expansion, and could, in fact, do with some cutbacks. Since it was no longer being assumed that any investment in higher education would provide an equitable return, the question naturally arose if governments might not *already* have overinvested in universities. To quote University Affairs:

> ...[Governments] were deeply disturbed by rapidly accelerating university costs, shaken by campus disorder, and disappointed with the immediate usefulness

> of the product from their point of view.
>
> By 1970 governments had decided that the spending spree was over. They were convinced that there was fat in the universities, and because they did not know precisely where it was, chose to reduce general funding levels and put pressure on universities to do the cutting themselves.[49]

The result was that universities throughout Canada faced what Alberta's Minister of Advanced Education described as "not quite a budget freeze, but you might call it a very heavy chill."[50]

The financial situtation of the universities continued to deteriorate throughout the seventies.[51] Provincial grants to universities were generally increased by a lower rate than that of inflation, which meant, in effect, that they underwent a series of cutbacks. Capital expenditures actually were reduced—nearly halved—during the seventies, and research funding both on and off campus was also reduced.[52] Table 3-4 indicates the extent of the budgetary cutbacks.

This was obviously of major concern to university administrators, but there was little they could do to prevent it. Of necessity, they responded by making budget cuts, raising tuition, and cutting back on services. Some educators, however, questioned if these cutbacks were always the appropriate ones. To quote J. A. Corry:

> ...the universities assumed that austerity was temporary and made the cuts which were the least painful to powerful interests in departments and faculties, and where the ground lost could be most easily regained when the austerity ended, e.g., library, equipment and maintenance. For the most part, they did not cut marginal programs and the staffs associated with them because of the uproar that would have caused...[53]

In any event, however, there was little further expansion of university programs and the major preoccupation of administrators became one of making ends meet.

TABLE 3-4

Expenditures on University Education by Type of Expenditures, Canada, 1960-61 to 1977-78

Year	Operating	Capital	Scholarships, Student Aid	Other (departmental)	Total
			($'000)		
1960-61	182,568 (67.0)	79,800 (29.2)	9,659 (3.5)	913 (0.3)	272,940 (100.0)
1961-62	211,330 (68.0)	85,008 (27.4)	13,211 (4.3)	1,080 (0.3)	310,629 (100.0)
1962-63	244,015 (64.4)	112,487 (29.7)	21,044 (5.6)	1,147 (0.3)	378,693 (100.0)
1963-64	289,931 (62.8)	146,100 (31.7)	24,040 (5.2)	1,326 (0.3)	461,397 (100.0)
1964-65	345,222 (57.8)	217,746 (36.4)	32,789 (5.5)	1,569 (0.3)	597,326 (100.0)
1965-66	432,732 (58.7)	251,812 (34.2)	49,618 (6.7)	2,421 (0.3)	736,583 (100.0)
1966-67	582,295 (58.7)	324,466 (32.7)	73,618 (7.4)	11,268 (1.1)	991,647 (100.0)
1967-68	748,868 (60.2)	378,101 (30.4)	100,277 (8.1)	16,165 (1.3)	1,243,411 (100.0)
1968-69	896,853 (65.9)	335,936 (24.7)	108,572 (8.0)	18,611 (1.4)	1,359,972 (100.0)
1969-70	1,084,197 (67.6)	356,305 (22.2)	140,173 (8.7)	23,106 (1.4)	1,603,781 (100.0)
1970-71	1,223,947 (68.3)	392,243 (21.9)	159,815 (8.9)	14,807 (0.8)	1,790,812 (100.0)
1971-72	1,365,727 (73.2)	315,194 (16.9)	163,139 (8.7)	20,457 (1.1)	1,864,517 (100.0)
1972-73	1,433,712 (76.8)	238,924 (12.8)	161,652 (8.6)	33,513 (1.8)	1,867,801 (100.0)
1973-74	1,580,956 (77.9)	223,819 (11.0)	184,202 (9.1)	40,933 (2.0)	2,029,910 (100.0)
1974-75	1,837,964 (77.5)	188,854 (8.0)	197,558 (8.3)	147,795 (6.2)	2,372,171 (100.0)
1975-76	2,175,362, (78.8)	214,258 (7.8)	230,877 (8.4)	140,045 (5.1)	2,760,542 (100.0)
1976-77	2,442,321 (79.7)	156,254 (5.1)	313,029 (10.2)	151,070 (4.9)	3,062,674 (100.0)
1977-78	2,620,003 (78.6)	186,811 (5.6)	384,447 (11.5)	144,121 (4.3)	3,335,382 (100.0)

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, *From the Sixties to the Eighties: A Statistical Portrait of Canadian Higher Education*, page 33.

There was also a renewed emphasis on 'accountability'. Given the atmosphere of general fiscal restraint which emerged in the seventies, university administrators found themselves in vigorous competition for funding, both with other social priorities, such as health care, and with each other. There was a constant demand for administrators to be able to demonstrate why investment in their program would be more worthwile or provide a better return than investment in some other. This inevitably led to a greater emphasis on quantitative measures, as such things as 'cultural enlightenment' or 'intellectual development' were too vague and intangible to be used as the basis of comparison for the relative merits of various programs.[54] While most administrators accepted the need for accountability without question (they were, after all, spending public funds), it did represent a further shift from the enlightenment model to the manpower model, which naturally disturbed the traditionalists. To quote one example:

> If administrators discuss the function of the university in such terms, is there any wonder we can take little pride in our profession? It was once thought that universities could make judgements about the intellectual quality of their work and of their faculty; but now we seem to be reduced to the mindless counting of heads, of pages printed and of salaries earned by former students! We have ceased, it seems, to be a profession with clear aims and high ideals, and have indeed become an *industry*— and a depressed one at that![55]

On the whole, however, accountability and the use of quantitative measures was not a major 'issue', though a development worth noting and of some relevance to the emergence of Athabasca University (as will be discussed in Chapter V).

A more controversial result of the financial squeeze on universities was the need to raise tuition.[56] Again, there was little that either the universities or the students could do to prevent this, and given the

inflationary times, the public generally accepted these tuition hikes as inevitable. Such increases, however, obviously represented a further restriction of accessibility to higher education for students from lower or working class backgrounds.[57]

The major issue to emerge as a result of the fiscal restraint imposed on universities, though was the unionization of faculty. This was the dominant theme of the latter half of the decade, as faculty associations applied for certification as unions and engaged in tough bargaining with the universities. In 1970, only Ryerson and Sherbrooke had collective bargaining units, but by 1977 there were over 33 unions negotiating with 24 universities.[58] This sudden and dramatic increase in union activity among a 'professional' group which had traditionally seen itself as 'above' unionization was a direct consequence of the budget cutbacks. Faculty members were determined that the necessary budget cuts were not going to be made in *their* salaries.[59] Inevitably, unionization led to a number of confrontations with university administrations, and University Affairs was constantly carrying articles on various negotiations, disputes, and the occasional strike, throughout the late seventies.

On the whole, university administrators accepted faculty unionization with good grace, perhaps because this too could be seen as a natural consequence of the shift from the enlightenment model to the manpower model, If universities were to be thought of as a productive industry rather than as hayens of 'high culture', then the replacement of a 'community of scholars' by a tough faculty union was merely a necessary realignment of 'worker-management' relations to the industrial norm. In any event, it is unlikely that professional 'dignity' would

have permitted unionization to take place, had the enlightenment model still predominated.

The financial problems of the universities were not the only consequence of rising graduate unemployment and the enrolment slowdown. A second issue to emerge as a result of the failure of higher education to continue to expand was a renewed concern over Canadianization.

In the sixties, the problem had been that Canadian universities had expanded faster than qualified Canadian personnel could be trained to staff them. The solution had seemed to be to expand graduate programs to meet future demands, while temporarily importing staff from other countries, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, this solution had been premised on the human capital model's assumption that higher education would continue to undergo rapid growth for at least another decade, and this had proven not to have been the case. The result was that by the time Canada was graduating its own PhD.s in sufficient numbers to staff its universities, the need for these new teachers had almost completely evaporated.

What made matters worse was that many of the American and British professors in Canadian universities had in the meantime achieved tenure. Thus, at the very time there was widespread un(der)employment of Canadian PhD.s, Canadian universities continued to be dominated by 'foreigners'. To quote University Affairs:

> A side effect of this fluid employment situation [i.e., graduate unemployment] has been a wave of nationalism in Canadian universities. The call is now being heard to employ Canadians first, to control immigration. The citizenship of academics is being scrutinized more closely not only on a Canada-wide basis but particularly within individual departments.[60]

The issue of foreign domination was especially contentious in departments

of potlitcal science, sociology, and so on, since Canadian content is particularly important in the social sciences.[61]

Administrators often had mixed reactions to this issue. On the one hand, they tended to be aware of the problem of foreign domination in certain departments and disciplines, and sympathetic to the demand for greater Canadian representation. On the other hand, they were sometimes reluctant to admit that Canadian content was a problem in *their* department,[62] and they also had a commitment to international scholarship. CAUT passed a resolution calling for preference to be given to Canadian candidates, a few universities established hiring policies favoring Canadian citizens, and the federal immigration authorities set up procedures to ensure that universities had adequately advertized positions in Canada but without success before permitting them to import staff. On the whole, the problem remains, but is slowly getting better.

Of course, the concern over the lack of Canadian content in university curriculum was not limited to the employment aspect. The need for improved Canadian content was a major theme in higher education throughout the seventies, peaking with the publication of the Symons Report, To Know Ourselves, in March 1976.[63] The AUCC Commission on Canadian Studies, which produced the report, generated an incredible amount of imput, receiving over 1,000 submissions and 30,000 letters from concerned organizations and individuals![64] The report was highly influential, and reasonably effective in bringing about reform.[65]

A somewhat related issue was the establishment of differential tuition fees for foreign students in Alberta and Ontario in the late seventies. This discrimination was justified on the grounds that

the province could expect relatively little return on its investment in the foreign student, and should therefore not have to subsidize him to the same extent as the Canadian student. While wholly consistent with the manpower model, many administrators found it morally reprehensible. Several universities resisted provincial pressure to establish differential fees, but to little avail, and in the end, the differential fees were adopted.

A third consequence of the enrolment slowdown was a renewed interest in part-time and mature students. There were three reasons for this. First, the number of part-time students continued to increase rapidly, even though the number of full-time students was levelling off. Table 3-5 gives the figures for part-time undergraduate and graduate enrolment, 1962-63 to 1977-78, and Chart 3-1 shows that part-time enrolment increased by nearly 70% beween 1971 and 1979. Thus, the number and proportion of university students attending part-time steadily increased to the point where administrators were forced to acknowledge the importance of part-time study. Second, the human capital model had already called into question the 'cloistered' connotations of full-time study under the enlightenment model, and had instead stressed the 'value-added' concept of higher education. Vocational preparation, and particularly professional upgrading, could be as easily accomplished on a part-time or 'recurrent' basis, as through full-time study, and had the additional advantage that the student was still participating in the labour force. The inertia of adminstrative arrangements had, however, kept most institutions from embracing such concepts as 'stopping out' or 'recurrent education' until the enrolment slowdown forced them to accept that it was already happening. To quote Canadian University And

TABLE 3-5

Part-time University Enrolment by Level,
1962-63 to 1977-78

	Undergraduate		Graduate		Total	
	No.	Index	No.	Index	No.	Index
1962-63	38,639 (87.8)	100.0	5,351 (12.2)	100.0	43,990 (100.0)	100.0
1963-64	50,427 (88.6)	130.5	6,498 (11.4)	121.4	56,925 (100.0)	129.4
1964-65	56,481 (88.6)	146.2	7,268 (11.4)	135.8	63,749 (100.0)	144.9
1965-66	65,299 (89.4)	169.0	7,724 (10.6)	144.3	73,023 (100.0)	166.0
1966-67	74,678 (88.1)	193.3	10,111 (11.9)	189.0	84,789 (100.0)	192.7
1967-68	87,168 (89.1)	225.6	10,696 (10.9)	199.9	97,864 (100.0)	222.5
1968-69	91,182 (89.7)	236.0	10,484 (10.3)	195.9	101,666 (100.0)	231.1
1969-70	108,287 (88.8)	280.2	13,719 (11.2)	256.4	122,006 (100.0)	277.3
1970-71	142,206 (90.8)	368.0	14,370 (9.2)	268.5	156,576 (100.0)	355.9
1971-72	137,358 (88.4)	355.5	18,029 (11.6)	336.9	155,387 (100.0)	353.2
1972-73	132,500 (86.6)	342.9	20,481 (13.4)	382.6	152,981 (100.0)	347.8
1973-74	137,654 (85.4)	356.2	23,510 (14.6)	439.4	161,164 (100.0)	366.4
1974-75	145,789 (85.6)	377.3	24,460 (14.4)	457.1	170,249 (100.0)	387.0
1975-76	158,294 (85.4)	409.7	26,960 (14.6)	503.8	185,254 (100.0)	421.1
1976-77	163,272 (85.5)	422.6	27,685 (14.5)	517.4	190,957 (100.0)	434.1
1977-78	170,840 (85.8)	442.1	28,240 (14.2)	527.8	199,080 (100.0)	452.6

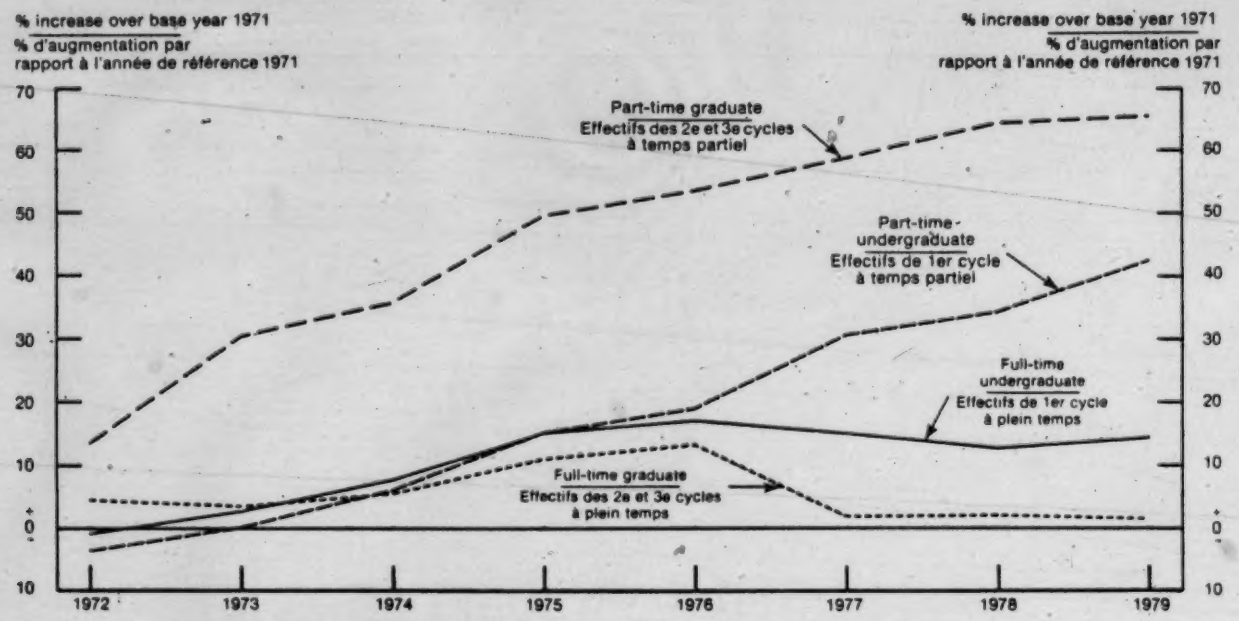
Note: Percentage in brackets shows the distribution between undergraduate and graduate categories.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, *From the Sixties to the Eighties: A Statistical Portrait of Canadian Higher Education*, page 38.

CHART 3-1

Annual Percentage Increases over Fall 1971 Enrolment by Level and Registration Status, Canada, 1972 to 1979

Augmentations annuelles en pourcentage des effectifs par rapport à l'automne 1971, selon le niveau et le régime d'études, Canada, 1972 à 1979



SOURCE: Statistics Canada, *Education Statistics: Service Bulletin*, Vol.2, #4, page 5.

College:

> Universities are beginning to feel the actual pinch of the socially-predictable fall-off in anticipated enrolment (with subsequent problems of budgeting, grants, and building projections). But, in some cases, there's an upsurge in part-time and adult registration.
>
> High school graduates are now reinforcing a trend that was obvious two years ago: refusal to follow the traditional, sequential, pattern of further education assumed by the universities; disenchantment with a university degree as an entré to employment; taking seriously the drop-in drop-out theory of "recurrent" education; and doing the travel bit before university instead of after.[66]

Third, as the expected increases in full-time enrolments failed to materialize, universities turned to part-time students to 'fill the

gap'. Universities needed the part-time students, and the tuition and government grants they represented, to make ends meet. Similarly, if they were unable to recruit as many of the 18-24 year olds as they had previously predicted, they would turn instead to the mature student and attempt to recruit more adults.[67]

The result was that university administrators began to provide better counselling and social services for part-time and mature students, such as the establishment of Woodsworth College at the University of Toronto, and generally began to view them less as 'second-class citizens'.[68] The expansion of correspondence courses and the development of 'open' universities may be seen as a logical consequence of this trend.

Another issue in higher education to emerge in the seventies was that of sexism. As the women's movement gathered momentum throughout the society and began to change attitudes (however slowly), the number and proportion of women attending university increased. This, as discussed in Chapter II, was a reflection of the emerging acceptance of women in the workplace and the consequent acceptance of investment, through higher education, in their human capital. In other words, parents were more prepared to send their daughters to university once it had become the norm for women to have their own careers, rather than merely accepting low level employment until such a time as they could marry out of the labour force. Thus, more women were entering higher education in hope of improved career opportunities at precisely the same time that male enrolment was declining in face of graduate unemployment.

> After a steady increase, the *male* [participation] rate peaked in 1971 at 22.3%, and fell slightly to 21.1% by 1976. On the other hand, the *female* rate continued climbing from 14.6% in 1971 to 17.1%.

> Therefore, the mix of post-secondary students shifted from 30% female in 1962 to 40% in 1971 and 45% in 1976. Only because of growing female participation did the total enrolment rate rise between 1971 and 1976.[69]

These increases were not, of course, distributed equally among all faculties. Only 4.0% of engineering students in 1975 were female, for example, while the proportion of women in the 'more appropriate' faculty of library and record science rose from 79.1% in 1972, to 95.4% in 1975.[70] Still, there were significant gains made in such traditionally male subjects as optometry (29.9% in 1975), pharmacy (60.5%), veterinary medicine (29.6%), and even law (26.8% in 1975).[71]

In any event, administrators, educators, and students alike became sensitized to the under-representation of women in many areas of higher education, and various reforms— such as more active recruitment of female students, and in some cases, the establishment of minimum quotas and affirmative action— were introduced.[72] There were also a number of studies on the position of female faculty, and subsequent reforms, but as with the issue of Canadianization, there remains the problem of what to do with the currently (male) tenured staff.

Another development in the seventies was the further vocationalization of higher education. As suggested earlier in the chapter, the emergence of the manpower model represented a demand on the part of goverments that further investment in higher education must be based on the demonstrable economic need for the additional graduates. In other words, governments applied considerable pressure to universities to make their programs more relevant to the immediate needs of the labour market. To quote then Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Robert Andras:

> ...[Universities must] be held responsible for continuing to produce degree or diploma holders with a less than desirable level of employment-related skills or experience. General arts BAs spring to mind as a sterling example.
>
> Moreover, it would appear, with some notable exceptions such as Ryerson, that our places of higher learning have in the past been less than responsive to the needs of the world of work in designing their curricula.[73]

The result was a continual, if gradual, shift towards vocationalism in the universities, as additional funding (especially capital grants) could only be obtained for 'vocationally useful' programs. For example, in spite of the current fiscal restraint imposed on universities in Alberta, the government is providing the necessary funding to expand the Faculty of Business Administration and Commerce at the University of Alberta, and the development of two new post-graduate degrees in the management of public corporations.[74] Thus, universities are continuing to undergo a gradual erosion of their 'cultural mission' and its replacement with vocational preparation.

This is not, however, simply the result of government action. The vocationalization of higher education in the seventies was also partly due to enrolment slowdowns, which were faculty specific. In Table 3-6 it can be seen that while the number of students enroled in arts and science increased only marginally between 1969 and 1976 (about 10,000, or less than 7%), the number of commerce and business administration students nearly *doubled* in the same period (up over 16,000). The percentage of university students registered in the arts faculty dropped from a high of 44.0% in 1966 to a low of 26.6% in 1976, while the percentage in business administration rose from 5.8% to 9.6% in the same peroid. And even *within* the arts faculty itself, the more

TABLE 3-6

Full-time Undergraduate Enrolment by Field of Specialization, 1962-63 to 1976-77

Field of Specialization	62-63	63-64	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71	71-72	72-73	73-74	74-75	75-76	76-77
Arts	55,869 (42.1)	60,656 (41.3)	69,489 (42.4)	81,673 (43.7)	92,680 (44.0)	100,175 (43.7)	100,876 (42.1)	98,164 (37.2)	95,511 (34.6)	93,379 (32.5)	84,202 (29.6)	85,061 (28.8)	86,008 (27.8)	89,364 (27.0)	89,440 (26.6)
Science	14,958 (11.3)	19,152 (13.0)	21,710 (13.3)	25,320 (13.5)	29,223 (13.9)	32,913 (14.4)	36,919 (15.4)	40,947 (15.5)	43,910 (15.9)	42,177 (14.7)	45,311 (15.9)	46,623 (15.8)	46,581 (15.0)	45,770 (13.8)	44,380 (13.2)
Arts or Science	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,928 (3.8)	15,194 (5.5)	20,302 (7.1)	20,664 (7.2)	20,996 (7.1)	23,050 (7.4)	26,721 (8.1)	25,341 (7.5)
Sub-total	70,827 (53.4)	79,808 (54.4)	91,199 (55.7)	106,993 (57.2)	121,903 (57.9)	133,088 (58.1)	137,795 (57.5)	149,039 (56.5)	154,615 (56.0)	155,858 (54.3)	150,177 (52.7)	152,680 (51.8)	155,639 (50.3)	161,855 (48.9)	159,161 (47.4)
Agriculture	1,974 (1.5)	2,201 (1.5)	2,338 (1.4)	2,414 (1.3)	2,561 (1.2)	2,685 (1.2)	2,745 (1.1)	3,538 (1.3)	3,721 (1.3)	3,527 (1.2)	3,117 (1.1)	3,591 (1.2)	4,257 (1.4)	4,613 (1.4)	5,201 (1.5)
Commerce and Business Admin.	7,854 (5.9)	8,787 (6.0)	9,747 (6.0)	10,740 (5.7)	12,232 (5.8)	13,381 (5.8)	14,982 (6.2)	16,117 (6.1)	16,747 (6.1)	20,189 (7.0)	22,266 (7.8)	25,177 (8.5)	27,091 (8.8)	29,970 (9.1)	32,161 (9.6)
Education	16,061 (12.1)	17,948 (12.2)	20,628 (12.6)	24,045 (12.9)	27,277 (13.0)	28,101 (12.2)	28,757 (12.0)	35,627 (13.5)	38,531 (13.9)	38,841 (13.5)	36,770 (12.9)	38,450 (13.0)	40,305 (13.0)	45,118 (13.6)	46,787 (13.9)
Engineering and Applied Sciences	15,950 (12.0)	16,519 (11.2)	17,156 (10.5)	18,680 (10.0)	20,875 (9.9)	23,280 (10.2)	24,866 (10.4)	25,076 (9.5)	25,706 (9.3)	26,635 (9.3)	25,656 (9.0)	25,915 (8.8)	28,054 (9.1)	30,868 (9.3)	32,815 (9.8)
Fine and Applied Arts	719 (0.5)	864 (0.6)	987 (0.6)	1,239 (0.7)	1,620 (0.8)	1,938 (0.8)	2,459 (1.0)	4,411 (1.7)	5,446 (2.0)	7,505 (2.6)	9,005 (3.2)	9,900 (3.4)	10,514 (3.4)	11,422 (3.4)	11,838 (3.5)
Dentistry	1,255 (0.9)	1,182 (0.8)	1,241 (0.8)	1,284 (0.7)	1,335 (0.6)	1,366 (0.6)	1,487 (0.6)	1,796 (0.7)	1,878 (0.7)	2,034 (0.7)	1,835 (0.6)	1,886 (0.6)	1,868 (0.6)	1,916 (0.6)	1,961 (0.6)
Medicine	4,306 (3.2)	4,443 (3.0)	4,635 (2.8)	4,580 (2.4)	4,795 (2.3)	5,003 (2.2)	5,240 (2.2)	5,558 (2.1)	5,733 (2.1)	6,330 (2.2)	6,815 (2.4)	7,088 (2.4)	8,361 (2.7)	8,843 (2.7)	9,328 (2.8)

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, *From the Sixties to the Eighties: A Statistical Portrait of Canadian Higher Education*, page 36.

'practical' disciplines, such as economics, continued to expand while enrolments in other fields dropped markedly.[75]

This is again probably a reflection of graduate unemployment, and particularly the underemployment of holders of general BAs. Students and their parents have lost faith in the ability of a general 'liberal arts' education to provide career opportunities and they have therefore opted for more specifically vocational programs. The inevitable result has been a shift in higher education towards further vocationalization, and the reinforcement of the manpower model.[76]

A minor theme in Canadian higher education, but which nevertheless turned up occasionally in the pages of University Affairs, was concern over pollution and the environment. This concern echoed the environmental issues then current in the media.

Other developments during the seventies which are of relevance here had already emerged during the sixties. Administrative structures were experimented with and occasionally discarded, but the major preoccupation with this issue had already passed. Student protest had faded away by the mid-seventies as students became more concerned with their own immediate futures and the very real threat of unemployment. The debate over the redefinition of the role of the university similarly took a back-seat to the pressing issues of graduate unemployment and the enrolment slowdowns, and in view of the *de facto* triumph of vocationalism and the manpower model, became somewhat irrelevant. Educational innovation continued, but the former emphasis on adapting elite teaching methods to mass education was replaced by a new focus on providing *cheaper*, more cost effective education.

The federal role in higher education again became an issue in the

late seventies, when a new federal-provincial cost-sharing arrangement for post-secondary education was negotiated. The new agreement, announced in February 1977, was similar to that established in 1967, except that federal matching funds were changed to per capita grants. This had two major effects: First, it meant that provinces no longer had to spend a dollar of their own for every federal dollar they received. Second, the provinces hoped that in the long run this would make for less federal control, while the federal government hoped it would mean a reduction in federal funding in higher education.[77] Just in case there was any doubt that this represented another step back from involvement in education by federal government, the ninth annual conference of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) one month later reiterated that the provinces would not tolerate *any* federal interference whatsoever.[78]

Finally, the provincialization of higher education was also increasing in terms of encroachments on institutional autonomy, throughout the seventies. To quote the report on the 1975 annual business meeting of the AUCC:

> Claude Thibault, executive director of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), told the delegates at the annual business meeting on October 29 that provincial control of universities has now grown to such an extent that universities must now ask themselves how much more they can give up and still remain universities....
>
> "The autonomy of the universities is gradually being eroded in the name of the system. It has been done subtly and in acceptable dosages, but I think our institutions are rapidly reaching the point of no return."[79]

This issue remains unresolved, but given that the major funding for all universities comes from the provincial governments (including those

grants which originated with the federal government), there is little likelihood of the universities regaining lost ground.

To summarize, then, the seventies were characterized by a sudden leveling off of enrolments, brought on by graduate un(der)employment. The unemployment problem led to a questioning of the human capital model and its subsequent reformulation (though not necessarily as an explicit level) as the 'manpower' model. This and the enrolment slowdowns caused governments to question the usefulness of further post-secondary expansion and subsequently to impose fiscal restraints, and to stress accountability. This in turn forced universities to raise tuition and to cut their services and budgets. This led to faculty unionization, as university teachers protected themselves from the cutbacks.

The enrolment slowdowns also rekindled concern over Canadianization, as graduates were unable to find employment in the American and British dominated universities. At the same time, the continued increases in part-time and adult students while full-time enrolment leveled off, led many universities to re-evaluate the importance of part-time and recurrent studies. Similarly, the women's movement and the changing mix of post-secondary students brought the issue of sexism to the attention of the universities.

Finally, the enrolment declines in the liberal arts and the pressure from governments to provide occupationally relevant education further encouraged the trend towards vocationalization of the universities.

Or to quote Lucien Michaud's summary of higher education in 1978:

> Too many professors chasing too few students; too many students chasing too few jobs; and too many applicants chasing too few university positions.[80]

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]The discussion in this chapter is based primarily upon an analysis of University Affairs, a publication of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. Useful overviews of the 1960s were also provided by Edward Sheffield, "The Post-War Surge In Post Secondary Education: 1945-1969", Canadian Education: A History, J.D. Wilson, Robert Stamp, Louis-Philippe Audet, eds., (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1970), and Henry Jonhson, A Brief History Of Canadian Education, (Toronto:McGraw-Hill of Canada, 1968), pp. 187-193.

University Affairs was chosen over the CAUT Bulletin as the attitudes of administrators are of more relevance here than those of university teachers. University Affairs was chosen over Canadian Universities and Colleges because, (a) it has a longer history, giving more complete coverage of the period, (b) it has a significantly larger circulation, and (c) as a publication of the AUCC it is in some ways more 'official' than the commercially oriented Canadian Universities and Colleges. And of course, as a Canadian publication it is more relevant to issues in Canadian higher education than any of the British or American publications covering higher education during this period.

[2]D.B.S./Statistics Canada, Survey of Higher Education, continued after 1970 as Fall Enrolments In Universities And Colleges.

[4]W.Clark, M.S.Devereaux, Zoltan Zsigmond, The Class of 2001: The School-Age Population; Trends And Implications, 1961-2001, (Ottawa: Statistics Canada and the Canadian Teachers Federation, 1979), p. 29.

[3]Statistics Canada, From The Sixties To The Eighties: A Statistical Portrait Of Canadian Higher Education, (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1979) 2nd ed., p. 13.

[5]Zoltan Zsigmond and C.J.Wenaas, Enrolment In Educational Institutions By Province, 1951-52 to 1980-81, Economic Council of Canada, Staff Study no. 25, (Ottawa: Economic Council of Canada, 1970), Table A-3, p. 90.

[6]Ibid, p. 14.

[7]Ibid, p. 31.

[8]John Clifford Long, An Historical Study Of The Establishment of College Systems In Ontario And Alberta In The 1960's, Research Studies in Post Secondary Education, no. 20, (Edmonton:Alberta Colleges Commission, 1972), p.30. He is citing George Flower, The Canadians, J.M.S.Careless and R. Craig Brown, eds, (Toronto: Macmillian Co. of Canada, 1967) p. 571.

[9]Ibid., pp. 27-30, and Zsigmond and Wenaas, pp. 9-10.

[10]For an alternative interpretation, see David N. Smith, Who Rules The Universities (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974), pp. 139-172. He suggests that the shift from on-the-job training to institutional formal vocational preparation is:

> ...vitally important on the level of exploitation because the state, by undertaking the financial support of universities, has *socialized* the costs of education. What this means is that the general population now bears the brunt of the costs for training a labour force to serve the ruling class. (p. 60.)

[11]Sheffield, pp. 423-426.

[12]See for example the comments of the Bladen Commission quoted in Chapter II, p. 19.

[13]Again, the statement of the Bladen Commission quoted on page of Chapter II is an excellent example.

[14]Zisgmond and Wenaas, p. 37.

[15]Dominion Bureau of Statistics/Statistics Canada, Survey of Higher Education.

[16]Zisgmond and Wenaas, p.

[17]University Affairs 5 (February 1964) 15.

[18]See for example, Martin Trow's classic paper, Problems In The Transition From Elite To Mass Higher Education (Berkeley, Calif.: Carnegie Commission On Higher Education, 1973).

[19]Edward Sheffield, University Affairs 6 (October 1964)

[20]Sheffield, "Post-Secondary Education: 1949-1969", pp. 428-429.

[21]An example of the continuing encroachment of Provincial authority on the autonomy of the universities is the recent decision of the Alberta Government to relocate Athabasca University to the town of Athabasca. The move was against the unanimous counsel of the education elite which believed that Athabasca University could not function properly away from the intellectual and cultural resources of a major city, and that it would not be able to attract top rate staff if isolated in a rural community. The then President of Athabasca University, Dr. W.A.S. Smith,

resigned over the issue, stating that the government order was an unacceptable intrusion on the University's autonomy. Dr. Checkland, the longest standing member (and former Chair) of the Governing Authority, also resigned in protest, calling the government decision "high handed, arbitrary and arrogant". The other University staff repeatedly denounced the move, and a storm of public controversy over the issue erupted in the pages of the Edmonton Journal and in the electronic media. (See, for example, "Two Resign Over Plan To Relocate University", March 13, 1980; "Sam Smith Says No", March 14, 1980; "AU Needs What A City Provides"; "Athabasca U Council Disappointed About Relocation", March 12, 1980; "U Faculty Censures Governors", April 3, 1980; "Staff Plan Protest At Athabasca U Council Meeting", April 17, 1980; "Board, Staff Battle At Athabasca U", April 1, 1980; "Our Universities Must Remain Free", June 19, 1980; and "MLA Denies U Move Would Benefit Him", all from the Edmonton Journal.)

The government was completely unmoved by this protest, and the relocation is going ahead as ordered.

[It is interesting to note in this regard that shortly after the last of the controversy over the relocation of Athabasca University had subsided, the government ordered the Alberta Correspondence School to relocate to Barrhead predictably setting off another wave of protest from its staff. This is not only an indication of how little such demonstrations concern the Progressive Conservative government, but may also imply that it perceives little difference between a provincially administered secondary *school* and a (supposedly) autonomous *university*.]

[22]J. Percy Smith [then Executive Secretary of CAUT], "The Duff-Berdahl Report On University Government", University Affairs 7 (April 1966) 1-3.

[23]Ibid.

[24]"Duff-Berdahl Conference Documents The Fall Of The 'Walls of Jericho", University Affairs 9 (February 1968) 11-14.

[25]Alvin Finkle, "CUS Died Because It Tried To Deal With Realities — Finkle", University Affairs 11 (February 1970) 21-22, reprinted from the Manitoban, October 28, 1969).

[26]To quote one student leader at the 1968 CUS conference, "There's a real danger that the administration will make changes this year faster than we can demand them." ["Universities Seek New Definition Of The Nature Of The University", University Affairs 10 (October 1968) 1.]

The article goes on to say "His remark reflects the paradox that, in a predicted year of campus revolution, it is the universities themselves which are reponsible for much of the ferment."

[27]"Canadian Union Of Students Condemns 'Corporate' Universities", University Affairs 10 (October 1968) 16-17.

[28]"Compulsory Student Union Debate Continues", University Affairs 10 (December 1969) 4.

[29]Sheffield, "Post-Secondary Education: 1949-1969", p. 425.

[30]Finkle, p. 22; and Kirk Patterson, "NUS Showing Strength", University Affairs 15 (July 1974) 13.

[31]Finkle; and Norm Wickstrom, "Whatver Happened To Student Power" University Affairs 11 (May 1970) 20, both provide penetrating analysis of the movement's ultimate collapse.

[32]Claude Bissell, "President's Report", University Affairs 12 (July 1971) 7, reprinted from President's Report For The Year Ended June 1970, University of Toronto. He goes on to say:

> But it [the sixties] was also the decade when traditional institutional values were called into question. The university, one might say, suffered an identity crisis....

[33]"Which Ends Do Canadian Universities Serve? CUS Asks", University Affairs 10 (October 1969) 6; "Universities Seek New Definition Of The University" 10 (October 1968) 1 (see also the rest of that issue); and "Nature Of Contemporary University Is Theme Of AUCC Annual Meeting In November", University Affairs 10 (September 1968) 24. University Affairs 10 (October 1968) is a special issue on administrative reform, student protest, and the role of the university.

[34]"Universities Seek New Definition Of The University". The article quotes the McGill University's commission as saying: "What is required is nothing less than a redefinition of the nature of the university."

Another indication of the popularity of this self-analysis can be found in Edward Sheffield's findings in 1969 that there was a great deal of research on higher education currently underway in Canada. ["Research On Higher Education In Canada Is Thriving— Sheffield", University Affairs 11 (January 1970) 8.]

[35]"Canadian Union Of Students Condemns 'Corporate' Universities, University Affairs 10 (October 1968) 16; and "We See The University A Servant Of Industry And Government", University Affairs 10 (October 1968) 11.

[36]See, for example, "Operation Retrieval", University Affairs 7 (April 1966) 16; and "Operation Retrieval Lists Due Early In January", University Affairs 9 (December 1967) 16.

[37]See, for example, R. Lynn Moxham, "Memo From An Expatriate

Canadian", University Affairs 7 (February 1966) 1-2; Andrew Nimmo, University Affairs 15 (October 1974) 12; and Peter Burstyn, "Canadian 'Refugee' Writes", University Affairs 15 (September 1974) 22.

[38]Johnson, pp. 190-191.

[39]Ibid., pp. 191-192.

[40]Statistics Canada, Preliminary

[41]Zisgmond and Wenaas, p. 89. See also, "Total University Enrolment Could Reach One Million By 1980", University Affairs 11 (May 1970) 6.

[42]"Jobs For Professionals Drops 30% In One Year", University Affairs 12 (April 1971) 4. See also, W. G. Schneider [President National Science Council, 1969], "Schneider Reviews State Of Science In Canadian Universities" University Affairs 10 (February 1969) 12-13; Robert Stanfield, "Three Developments Trouble Stanfield" University Affairs 10 (July 1969) 7; Zoltan Zsigmond, Future Trends In Enrolment And Manpower Supply In Ontario; and University Affairs 12 (February 1971) which is a special issue on the "employment crisis".

[43]Stanfield, p. 7; and Lynda Woodcock, "Money Is A Major Worry For Students", University Affairs, 17 (March 1976) 4-5.

[44]Compare, for example, Table 3-2 with Zisgmond and Wenaas, Table A-2, p. 89.

[45]Stanfield, p. 7. To quote:

> Traditionally, one remedy to unemployment was education and training. In most cases the trained man or woman still has a better chance for a job. But there has been a change. This new kind of unemployment [that is, of university graduates] requires a new kind of response.

[46]Andre Fortier, "Economy Cannot Support Too Many Artists", University Affairs 16 (December 1975) 19. CBC's The National had a "Special Report" on unemployment among drama graduates in March, 1980, so this example remains timely and unresolved.

[47]Of course, some administrators had always questioned the wisdom of the indiscriminate production of graduates in limited specializations, but this never became a major concern or theme in higher education until the widespread graduate unemployment of the early seventies.

[48]The Grahman Commission must again be mentioned here as a possible exception. See Chapter II, footnote 29.

[49]J. A. Corry, quoted by Lynda Woodcock, "Governments Will Remain Unsypathetic Until They See Real Internal Reform Taking Place", University Affairs 17 (July 1976) 2.

[50]Jim Foster, quoted in "Alberta Grants Both Up And Down", University Affairs 14 (February 1973) 9.

Jack McNie, then Minister of Colleges and Universities for Ontario, announced in November of 1972 that all capital grants to universities were being cut off, and that only projects already under construction would be followed through. "After spending $868 million on capital grants to universities during the last decade, it is time for a pause." (Quoted in "Time For A P use", University Affairs 14 (January 1973) 8.

[51]See, for example, "Ontario Universities Angry At Support Level For 75-76", University Affairs 16 (January 1975) 3; "University Of Manitoba Concerned About Financial Situation", University Affairs 16 (May 1975) 6; "Federal Government Reduces Its Spending Through New Funding Arrangements", University Affairs 18 (April 1977) 1.

The May 1975 cover of University Affairs depicted the pillars of Academia as marble dollar signs, but with the pillars developing noticeable cracks. The same picture was redrawn for the April 1977 issue, but this time the pillars were shown in total collapse, a forceful expression of the feeling in academic circles towards the continued cutbacks.

[52]See, for example, "University Research Receives Another Blow", University Affairs 16 (September 1975); "Angry Researchers Take Action", University Affairs 17 (May 1976) 2; and "Medicine Could Permanently Lose Both Research Professionals And Trained Technicians", University Affairs 16 (May 1976) 3.

[53]J. A. Cory, p. 2.

[54]Kenneth Keragtan, "Quantitative Measurement Is Necessary Because Of Demands For Accountability", University Affairs 19 (October 1978) 10.

John T. Moore, "Some Comments On The Lament That University Teaching Is No Longer A Profession", University Affairs 19 (October 1978) 10; suggests that the emphasis on quantitative measures was also partly due to a "computer syndrome", that "it is fashionable to believe that anything that exists can be counted or measured in some way".

[55]Geoffrey Durrant, "Causes Of Crisis In Confidence Clear", University Affairs 19 (September 1978) 32.

[56]See, for example, "Tuition Fees Going Up In Several Provinces", University Affairs 17 (May 1976) 6; "Tuition Fees To Rise In Ontario", University Affairs 18 (January 1977) 12; "Increased Tuition Fees Seem Likely In B.C.", University Affairs 18 (April 1977) 28; and "Grants Down, Tuition Up", University Affairs 18 (July 1977) 10.

[57]Pike, "Enrolment And Accessibility"; and see also, Lynda Woodcock, "Money Is A Major Worry For Students", University Affairs 16 (March 1976) 4.

It may also be that higher tuition fees present a psychological barrier to potential students out of proportion to the actual financial hardship they represent.

[58]"Faculty Collective Bargaining At Canadian Post-Secondary Institutions", University Affairs 18 (May 1977) 14-15. See also, "Number Of Faculty In Bargaining Units Rising Steadily", University Affairs 17 (July 1976) 12.

[59]Donald Savage [then Executive Director of CAUT], cited by Martin Morf, "Disunity And Confusion About Objectives Seen As Universities' Basic Problems", University Affairs 17 (May 1976) 7. To quote:

> ...the current phase of financial restraint may turn into one of financial crisis. In a crisis, gentlemen sometimes cease to be gentlemen, and gentlemen's agreements cease to be agreements. "The only thing that matters is the legal contract," Dr. Savage pointed out. This means contracts of employment negotiated by faculty unions that can only be abrogated by provincial legislatures at the price of antagonizing the whole of organized labor. The highly motivated entrepreneur professor may give way to the alienated clockwatcher, but perhaps the entrepreneur professor did do a little too much outside consulting and, at any rate, there does not seem to be any other alternative.

[60]"The Employment Of University Graduates, Part I: A Review Of Problems And Solutions", University Affairs 12 (February 1971) 2. See also, "Canada Must Have Canadian Universities", University Affairs 14 (May 1973) and "Policies For Canadianization", University Affairs 15 (September 1974) 20-21.

[61]S. D. Clarke, "The American Take-Over Of Canadian Sociology: Myth Or Reality?", University Affairs 12 (February 1974) 16-18; abridged from Dalhousie Review (Summer 1973). See Also, "Canada Must Have Canadian Universities", and "Policies For Canadianization".

[62]T. H. B. Symons, quoted by Valarie Shore, "Results Being Seen But 'No Room For Complacency'" University Affairs 18 (July 1978) 6.

[63]T. H. B. Symons, To Know Ourselves: The Report Of The Commission On Canadian Studies (AUCC, 1975 [sic]).

[64]Gloria Pierce, "To Know Ourselves", University Affairs 17 (April 1976) 1-2.

[65]Valarie Shore, "Results Being Seen".

[66]"Enrolment Drop Means Stress On Part-Time And Mature Students", Canadian University And College 7 (March/April 1972) 3.

[67]Ibid.; and Statistics Canada, From The Sixties To The Eighties, p. 83. To quote from the latter;

> To take up the slack, more emphasis may be placed on part-time and continuing education, the major source population of which is the 25-35 age group. This age group will continue to increase after the number of 18-24 year olds begins to decline.
>
> The drop in the population of customary post-secondary age may improve opportunities for all adults to continue their education. In fact, adult education looms ever-larger in importance. Since modern society puts a great and growing demand on the ability to read, write, and comprehend, completion of higher levels of formal education is crucial to economic mobility. Moreover, today's rate of change is so rapid that most job-holders must continually absorb new information to keep up with developments in their field." (p. 83.)

(It is interesting to note the manpower model assumptions in this passage.)

[68]Lynda Woodcock, "Part-Time Students Make Great Strides At UofT", University Affairs 18 (November 1977) 4-5. This article provides an interesting summary of not only the progress of part-time study, but also some of the attitudinal barriers that blocked its earlier development.

[69]Statistics Canada, From The Sixties To The Eighties, pp. 13-14.

[70]Gladys Symons, "Can Women Translate Education Into Occupational Mobility?", University Affairs 19 (February 1978) 16-17.

[71]Ibid.

[72]For example, the engineering faculty at the University of Alberta is currently (March 1980) distributing flyers to Alberta high schools which, among other things, explains why women should seriously consider enroling in the faculty.

[73]Robert Andras, quoted in "Universities Also Responsible For Youth Unemployment, Says Andras", University Affairs 17 (October 1976) 11.

Note the manpower model assumptions and the total lack of sympathy for the enlightenment model's concepts of 'cultural enrichment', 'intellectual development', etc.

It is also interesting to note that the example Andras is quoted

elsewhere in the article as using to illustrate the universities' irresponsible over-production of graduates was the field of nursing in Ontario, "where there are about 200 vacancies and 3,500 new graduates." Yet today, less than four years later, the Alberta government is concerned over the *lack* of nurses, and the necessity to encourage more students to enter the field immediately if Alberta's new hospitals are to be staffed!

[74]"Faculty Profile: Business Administration And Commerce", Folio [University of Alberta weekly newsletter] 16 (March 1980) 3-4.

[75]Max Von Zur Muehlen, 1978-79 Enrolment Trends At Canadian Universities, (Statistics Canada, 1979), p. 3.

[76]An interesting illustration can be found in the joint Ph.D. program of Guelph-Waterloo Centre for Graduate Work in Chemistry, wherein course work and a thesis written at Waterloo are combined with work experience at a selected job.

> "...until now, most university PhD programs have been primarily directed at developing new faculty members. But job opportunities have dried up in the university field now that enrolments have leveled off. If PhD holders are going to find jobs they will have to look to other areas, and we hope this program will produce scientists who are more acceptable for non-university jobs."
>
> The program is designed to overcome industry's objections to hiring scientists with PhDs because they are too specialized and are unlikely to be interested in the kinds of research problems that concern industry. [Dr. Carty, quoted in "Joint Program To Prepare PhDs For Industry", University Affairs 17 (January 1976) 9.]

Again, notice the shift from the enlightenment model's 'knowledge for its own sake' to the human capital/manpower model's vocational preparation and the development of skills for industry.

[77]Nancy Sullivan, "Federal Role On The Wane?", University Affairs 18 (February 1977) 2-3. This did not work out quite as intended, however. See, for example, Valerie Shore, "Federal Funding Due For A Change?", University Affairs 22 (February 1981) 4-5.

[78]"Ministers Tell Federal Government To Stay Out Of Education", University Affairs 18 (March 1977) 11.

[79]Claude Thibault, quoted in "Are Universities Reaching The Point Of No Return?", University Affairs 16 (December 1975) 2.

[80]Lucien Michaud [rector of the Universite de Sudbury], quoted in "Too Many...Too Few", University Affairs 19 (July 1978) 15.

CHAPTER IV

BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM: THE ALBERTA CONTEXT

In the last chapter, an attempt was made to outline the main issues facing higher education policy makers in Canada during the past twenty years. This was necessary in order to place the emergence of Athabasca University within its proper historical context. It is now necessary to deal more specifically with the situation in Alberta.

Before discussing the developments in post-secondary education in Alberta, however, it will first be necessary to identify the three main groups which were responsible for higher education policy in this province, and to distinguish between their positions. The responses of these three groups to the issues which arose in Alberta higher education were conditioned, at least in part, by their separate 'educational ideologies' and these must therefore be understood before proceeding further.[1] The issues themselves will then be described in the second section of the chapter.

ALBERTA EDUCATION POLICY ELITES

First, there is what may be termed the "education elite", which consists of the professional administrators in higher education at the policy-making level. This would include the Deputy Minister of Education (after 1972, Advanced Education) and his staff, university and college presidents and their top administrators, the Director of the Human Resources Research Council and his staff, and so on. These are

the individuals with a professional stake in higher education, and technical expertise in educational administration. While one must be cautious of oversimplification when attributing a common outlook to this group, whose actors often have disparate and occasionally conflicting goals, they do share the common experience of educational administration, and a 'belief' in higher education. In other words, they are graduates of the same sort of training, reading the same sort of journals, using the same sort of techniques, facing the same sort of problems, and adopting some of the same solutions, all of which tend to predispose them to certain shared values.

The education elite in Alberta may be characterized by its "progressive" ideology. While difficult to define precisely, it may be thought of as having five major components.

First, the needs of individuals are given priority. Education is a process of learning, of individual achievement, of self-fulfillment. Benefits to the society must inevitably follow as graduates take their place in the society and make their contribution to it, but it is through meeting the needs of the individual that the needs of society may best be met.

Second, there is confidence in the individual's ability to know his own needs and to make his own correct decisions without overmuch governmental or administrative direction.

Third, there is the belief that 'more equals better' in education, both in terms of the individual's training, and in the expansion of the education system. The more education an individual receives, the more cultured, productive, and self-fulfilled he will be. The higher the proportion of the population receiving training, the higher the percent-

age of cultured, productive, and fulfilled citizens the society will have.

Fourth, it therefore naturally follows that anyone who may benefit from higher education should be permitted, indeed encouraged, to undertake it. This is generally thought to include a significantly higher proportion of the population than is currently enroled in higher education. This also implies a concern for equality of educational opportunity.

Fifth, there is an openness to innovation. Ever since the triumph of the progressive movement in the thirties with the introduction of the 'enterprise' program in Alberta schools, Alberta has always been one of the first provinces to adopt, or at least to experiment with, the latest ideas in education. Possibly, this is partly due to the fact that Alberta is too new a province to have developed any entrenched traditions in education which must first be overcome, as is the case in England, or even Ontario, but it is also true that Alberta has what amounts to a 'tradition of innovation'. This has generally meant looking to American models in education and the importation of American personnel and ideas, and a de-emphasis of the British university model, which retains a stronger hold in Eastern Canada.[2]

The education elite, then, believes in 'education for its own sake' (points one to four) and in 'progress' (point number five, and the belief that there has been continuous movement towards the ideals represented by points one to four). While these are widely held values in our society, and therefore somewhat taken for granted, they stand in sharp contrast to European tradition of providing only that education appropriate to one's station, and of resisting the transition from elite to

mass higher education.

A more or less explicit statement of the education elite's ideology in the late sixties and early seventies may be found in the Report Of The Commission On Educational Planning (hereafter referred to as the Worth Report)[3] which was released in 1972. The Worth Report may be taken to repesent the position of the education elite because, in addition to considering a large number of submissions from interested groups and individuals, the Commission and its task force on post-secondary education was made up of many of the key people in the education establishment, including the Chairman of the Universities Commission; the Director of the Human Resources Research Council; the chief architect of the original academic model for Athabasca University; a future President of Athabasca University; and the Commission's Chair, Dr. Walter Worth, who was himself to become Deputy Minister of the new Department of Advanced Education.

The Worth Report opens by presenting the reader with a choice of two possible futures. The first is labeled "Second Phase Industrial Society" and is clearly depicted as a distopia. The second is labeled "Person-Centered Society" and this humanistic vision of the future is championed throughout the rest of the Report. The Commission's belief (and by extension, that of the education elite) in the primacy of the needs of the individual over those of the economy is apparent in this discussion:

> Thus, it can be argued that the realization of a second phase industrial society is undesirable, if not self-destructive, since it is directed by values that do not appear to be workable. Any criticism of it must include the argument that such a society does not serve human needs and wants. Individuals in this type of society spend their lives furthering the goals of continuing expansion of goods and services, increased levels of

> consumption and technological advance. Human needs and wants rate lower than the needs of the industrial system. Therefore, they must conform to the requirements of industry and technology....
>
> Even though people need contact with nature and beauty it is deemed uneconomical to design a humane environment or to provide money for aesthetics. Although the channels of mass communication offer a great potential for public enlightenment, they are used mainly to promote sales and develop a favorable image for business and government interests. Somehow the society is not serving the interest of the individuals who make it up.[4]

This unpleasant prospect is contrasted with the person-centered society preferred by the Commission:

> Central to this culture is a belief that the needs of individuals take precedence....
>
> The goals of the society include making economic growth meet human needs, achieving advances in knowledge and aesthetics and controlling social problems so that individuals may progress toward their own goals of self-fulfillment. The industrial system is subservient to, and responsible for serving these larger purposes of the society. The overarching goal is the cultivation and enrichment of all human beings.[5]

The Worth Report then defines the "four ideals which the Commission has come to regard as fundamental to the success of future education in the province"[6] and the cultivation of a person-centered society: a futures-perspective, life-long learning, participatory planning, and autonomous individuals.[7]

The education elite's belief in 'progress' may be seen in the discussion of the futures-perspective which urges not only educational innovation, but a complete reorientation of the process of education to one of preparing the student to deal with 'future shock'. The Worth Report's emphasis on life-long learning, and its proposals for the establishment of an "Alberta Academy" (discussed below) are clear indications that the education elite believes in 'education for its own

sake' and that 'more equals better'. Their belief in the primacy of the needs of the individual infuses the entire document, but is particularly clear in the emphasis on the role of education in creating autonomous individuals. Finally, their confidence in the individual's ability to know his own needs is reflected in their desire for participatory planning.

In Chapter III it was suggested that the personal professional stake of educational administrators (that is, the education elite) had in the expansion of higher education predisposed them to an acceptance of the human capital model. It can now be seen that, at least in Alberta the education elite's own ideology was also completely compatible with the human capital model. The economic arguments of the human capital model for the allocation of resources to higher education dovetail very nicely with progressive ideology. The human capital model therefore became part of the ideology of the education elite.

For example, the Post-Secondary Task Force of the Commission on Educational Planning stated in its Interim Proposals (February 1971) that:

> We believe that this nation or this province cannot afford (in the fullest sense of that word) to curtail development and thus expenditures in post-secondary education. Thus we predict that whatever proportion of the G.N.P. is required to support post-secondary education rationally will be forthcoming and so recommend...we reject the proposition that education is about to price or cost itself out of existence and assert that the revenue generating capacity of society as Seastone predicts, will more than match the voracious appetite of education....
>
> ...we recommend that [the student] be fully subsidized while pursuing any post-secondary education program and bear none of the cost while engaged in the program. Society will be amply repaid during the productive career of the individual that follows.[8]

However, a slight shift towards the manpower model may be detected in parts of the final report of the Commission in such statements as:

> Obsolescence or redundancy in programs and courses is a luxury which Albertans no longer can afford. The creation of new programs and the expansion of existing programs should occur only after the need for them has been very carefully assessed. A major indicator of this need is society's requirement for various categories of qualified manpower.[9]

In either case, it is clear that the Commission accepts that education represents 'investment' in human capital, although this is of secondary importance when compared to the development of "autonomous individuals" and the cultivation of a "person-centered society".

The second group involved with higher education policy in Alberta was the Social Credit Party, or more specifically, the Social Credit caucus. As the governing party for over thirty-five years, theirs was the ultimate responsiblity for the shape of the education system.

Social Credit ideology was based on rural populism. These populist origins had two major implications for educational policy.

First, proponents of Social Credit 'believed' in education. The Social Credit movement had its roots in a belief in religious and social proselytism, as exemplified by Aberhart's dual role as school principal and preacher. Social Crediters' belief in 'spreading the word' applied not only to gospel and the party line, but also to formal education.[10]

Second, Social Credit ideology gave first priority to the needs of the individual. The movement originated during the great depression in a demand for monetary reform, that is, in a desire to reorder the economy to better meet the needs of the province's rural population. Aberhart campaigned on the platform that it was "...the duty of the state through its Government to organize its economic structure in such a way that no

bona fide citizen, man, woman, or child, shall be allowed to suffer for lack of bare necessities...in the midst of plenty of abundance."[11] While the monetary reforms and Douglas economic theories were abandoned fairly early in the party's history, the priority given to the social welfare of the individual persisted in the form of a commitment to social services. Since the oil industry has provided 'plenty' since the Second World War, the Social Credit government steadily increased its spending on social services such as education, libraries, and health services until Alberta had one of the highest per capita expenditures in these fields of any province in Canada.

The priority given to the needs of the individual and to social services became especially pronounced during the mid-sixties when human resource development became the chief platform of the Social Credit campaigns. For example, following its re-election in 1967, the Social Credit government introduced Acts in the Spring Session establishing the Human Resources Research Council and the Human Resources Authority.

Explicit expression of this emphasis in Social Credit ideology may be found in the 1967 White Paper on Human Resources Development. Under a section entitled "Basic Principles and Values" the first two statements are:

> -Human resources will be treated as intrinsically more important than physical resources.
> -Prior consideration will be given to human beings individually (persons), rather than to human beings collectively (society).[12]

And again on the following page:

> (3) The individual human being is of supreme value and importance and ought to be regarded by governments and by society as intrinsically more important than non-human things....

(5) Society exists to enhance the development of free and creative human beings and should aspire toward the provision of full opportunity for every individual in every area of human endeavor.
(6) The supreme objective in developing the physical resources of a nation should be to make possible the full and free development of the human resources of that nation.[13]

While Social Credit ideology gives priority to the needs of the individual, it is clear that the emphasis on human resources development is compatible with the human capital model. It is equally clear that the primacy of the individual implies a rejection of the manpower model, since the manpower model places the needs of the economy over those of individuals.

Another factor which influenced Social Credit's view of higher education issues was that Social Credit Party members, especially in the early years, were themselves a little in awe of university education. Most of the party members, including the Cabinet, lacked university credentials, and those few who had degrees generally had only teaching certificates or other undergraduate degrees. While it would be incorrect to depict the Social Credit caucus as a 'bunch of country bumpkins', it is true that the party's rural roots militated against their developing any administrative or professional expertise independent of their governmental role. (This, as shall be seen below, is in sharp contrast to the Conservative Party caucus and Cabinet.) Thus, they were inclined to defer to the expertise of the education elite.[14]

The education elite which emerged during the Social Credit Party's tenure in office was, therefore, probably allowed to take the central role in educational planning. In addition to the education elite's potential claim to a relative monopoly of expertise in matters of

educational administration, the high priority given education under the Social Credit government, and the basic compatibility of the education elite's progressive ideology with the populism of the Social Credit, conceivably meant that the Social Credit caucus was inclined to give the education elite *carte blanche* on education policy.

The third group which was involved in higher education policy in Alberta was the Progressive Conservative Party of Peter Lougheed. First as the Official Opposition, and then as the government, Lougheed and his party have represented a third and opposing ideology.

On the surface, there was little to distinguish between Social Credit ideology and the "twelve policy guideposts" adopted by the Alberta Progressive Conservatives at their 1966 convention. The Conservatives provided a 'safe' alternative to the 'tired' Social Credit government with a platform which contained little or nothing that could not have been endorsed by most Social Crediters, or by most other Alberta voters.[15] The Albertan, for example, stated that "the Liberal party could readily subscribe to most of Mr. Lougheed's guideposts; Social Credit is unlikely publicly to reject any of them and even the New Democrats would find some of them acceptable."[16] The Progressive Conservative accession to power in 1971 is generally agreed to have been a "triumph of style rather than substance" since it was based on Lougheed's television image as a young, enthusiastic, and modern leader, while the Social Credit government was widely perceived as puritanical, old fashioned, and worn out.[17] The urban middle and professional classes, including a growing "arriviste bourgeoisie", had asserted themselves and tossed out a rural based populist party in favor of a party representing the urban and corporate elites.[18]

Underneath the basic similarities of the two parties' ideology, however, was one major philosophical difference: the Progressive Conservatives gave first priority to the development of the economy rather than to the needs of the individual. In the Conservative view, if one took care of the economy, the economy would take care of everything else.

Briefly stated, the Progressive Conservative position was that the Social Credit government had been relying on oil revenues, a depleting resource base, to finance social services instead of investing in industrialization, and that in the long run the province would be left without a viable economic base to continue to support this very high level of expenditure.

> We have been coasting on our petroleum revenues for the last decade— we have failed to use capital revenues from the petroleum industry— over one billion dollars— as an investment in the future by way of imaginative development research and promotional programs...we have utilized this one billion dollars from the petroleum industry to establish a built-in level of provincial government spending far larger than any other province on a per capita basis— $490 per person— double that of Ontario....[19]

The first priority, according to the Conservatives, was to invest in the province's economy. The social services provided by the Social Credit government were all very well, but oil revenues could not be expected to cover the rapidly escalating costs of education, health, and welfare services indefinitely.

This position had two major implications for education policy in Alberta. First, Lougheed felt that he had to put a 'lid' on education spending, which he did starting with his first budget.[20] Following the Progressive Conservative win, grants to universities, for example, were increased at a rate below that of inflation, which meant in effect that

universities underwent cutbacks. Second, the Progressive Conservatives adopted the manpower model in higher education, a fact acknowledged at least implicitly by combining the portfolios of Advanced Education and Manpower. Investment in higher education was to be based on the demand for graduates rather than on the demand for places, for in the Conservative view, it made no sense to train an individual for an occupation he would not be able to practice upon graduation and for which there was no economic need.

In addition to this ideological shift, the Conservative party caucus brought with them a considerable wealth of administrative experience from the boardrooms of the province's leading corporations.[21] The Conservative's attitude was that 'administration' was a function distinct from the content of whatever was being administered, that is, an efficient administrator could as easily run a chicken ranch, a university, or a government portfolio, and that familiarity with the 'product' was not necessary, or even particularly desirable.[22] Technical advice on the particular activity of the institution could be easily acquired from one's advisors and experts, but the administrative procedures were themselves independent of the content.

Thus, with the election of the Progressive Conservative government in 1971, the role of the education elite was severely curtailed. Instead of deferring to the expertise of the education elite, the Conservatives supplied their own. Far from being intimidated by the academic qualifications of the education elite, they tended to dismiss the education establishment as 'ivory tower' types, out of touch with the real world. The predominance of lawyers and graduates of business administration in the Progressive Conservative caucus meant that they were dealing with the

members of the education elite as fellow professionals, rather than as untrained consumers seeking professional advice. They entered the arena of higher education policy makers with their own procedures, techniques, and measures, and with the conviction that spending on higher education must be brought within bounds.[23]

This is not to suggest, of course, that the education elite was entirely without influence or that its fall from grace was immediate. Government policy in higher education continued to reflect the progressive ideology of the education elite for some time. For example, the second report of the Department of Advanced Education (1972-73) stated:

> The reorganized department is based upon the philosophy that an enduring value in Canadian society is the belief in man's capacity for growth and self-fulfillment. Education is an important process through which this growth takes place: it is a life-long experience which is broader than institutional learning. Society's best interests are served in nurturing the fullest development of its members. Accordingly, a fundamental task of government is to provide for adequate and equitable learning oppottunities for all its citizens. Citizen pariticipation in policy-making and planning is essential to insure that the education system is responsive to individual and societal needs.[24]

This very closely resembles the values expressed in the Worth Report, which is hardly surprising since Worth, as newly appointed Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, was the author of both. Durning his tenure as Deputy Minister he was able to introduce many of the proposals contained in the Worth Report,[25] but his first three years were his most successful.

Another indication of the continuing influence of the education establishment may be found in the universities' successful resistance to the draft "Adult Education Act" which the government introduced in August 1975, only to have to withdraw it by next January.

Nevertheless, the influence of the education elite was steadily eroded as the Conservatives became more confident in education and less responsive to progressive ideology. It was not that the Conservatives explicitly renounced the progressive ideals of the Worth Report, but rather that there was a subtle shift of emphasis in government policy towards the manpower model.[26]

Some indication of this shift may be found in the Report Of The Task Force To Review Student's Contributions To The Costs Of Post-Secondary Education (December, 1978). In the section describing the potential costs and benefits to be considered in the study, the discussion begins with a seven line paragraph on the "economic perspective", followed by a nine line paragraph on the "societal perspective", a nine line paragraph on the "manpower perspective", a five line pargraph on the "cultural perspective", and, *last and least*, a four line paragraph on the "personal perspective."[27] To quote:

> From a personal perspective, post-secondary education must meet personal aspirations and desires, *and at the same time those of the society, towards providing a trained workforce.* The value of post-secondary education to the individual in terms of self-fulfillment, *personal gain, maximizing opportunities,* was considered. [Emphasis added.][28]

It is not that the report failed to consider the personal benefits of higher education, but that these seemed to rank last, and that even then, the task force seemed to find it easier to think in terms of "trained workforce", "personal gain", and "maximizing [vocational] opportunities", than "self-fulfillment". On the following page the task force describes post-secondary education as a "qualified right". It provides an interesting contrast to the Worth Report's ideal of the development of "autonomous individuals", or with the Social Credit White Paper quoted

above.

Having identified the three groups responsible for education policy during the emergence of Athabasca University,[29] it is now necessary to turn to a brief discussion of the main developments in post-secondary education in the province.

TRENDS IN POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN ALBERTA, 1959-1979

Developments in higher education in Alberta followed roughly the same course as those in the rest of Canada. The most significant trend in the late fifties and sixties was the rapid expansion of both the scale and type of institution involved in post-secondary education. Full-time undergraduate enrolment in Alberta's universities more than quadrupled in the ten year period from 1959 to 1969, from 5,921 to 24,899.[30] Table 4-1 gives the figures for full-time undergraduate students from 1959-60 to 1978-79.

In order to accommodate the rising number of students, the provincial university system was greatly expanded. The Calgary campus of the University of Alberta was upgraded to independant status as the University of Calgary in 1966; the university transfer division of Lethbridge Public Junior College was upgraded to the University of Lethbridge in 1967; and there was a major building program carried out at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Plans for a fourth university (Athabasca) to be located near Edmonton were initiated in 1970, but as discussed in Chapter V, these did not turn out as originally envisaged.

At the same time, non-university post-secondary education was also undergoing rapid expansion, and contiued to increase even after university enrolments had leveled off or declined. Enrolment in post-secondary

TABLE 4-1

FULL-TIME UNDERGRADUATE ENROLMENT IN ALBERTA, 1959 TO 1979

Year	Undergraduates	Year	Undergraduates
1959-60	5,921	1969-70	24,891
1960-61	6,918	1970-71	25,233
1961-62	8,028	1971-72	25,587
1962-63	9,181	1972-73	24,257
1963-64	10,254	1973-74	25,604
1964-65	11,929	1974-75	26,978
1965-66	13,445	1975-76	28,879
1966-67	15,380	1976-77	29,032
1967-68	17,764	1977-78	28,611
1968-69	22,455	1978-79	27,687

SOURCES: D.B.S., *Fall Enrolments In Universities And Colleges In Canada*, and Statistics Canada, *Survey Of Higher Education In Canada*.

vocational programs increased tenfold in the ten year period 1959 to 1969, from 678 to 6,727, and it had doubled again by 1978.[31] Table 4-2 shows full-time enrolment in post-secondary vocational programs and total non-university post-secondary enrolment in Alberta, 1959-60 to 1978-79.

As elsewhere in Canada, these rapid enrolment increases during the sixties were the result of, first, an increase in the size of the 18-24 age cohort; second, an increase in the high school retention rates, third, an increase in the participation rate of 18-24 year olds in higher education; and fourth, a widespread 'belief' in education, and especially in its ability to provide access to preferred occupations.

TABLE 4-2

FULL-TIME ENROLMENT AT TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN ALBERTA, 1959-60 TO 1978-79

Year	Technical Institutes & Community Colleges	Vocational & Career Programs	Year	Technical Institutes & Community Colleges	Vocational & Career Programs
1959-60	2,267	678	1969-70	8,565	6,727
1960-61	2,486	911	1970-71	9,668	7,359
1961-62	2,729	1,032	1971-72	10,845	8,577
1962-63	2,923	1,154	1972-73	11,694	9,347
1963-64	3,411	1,687	1973-74	12,250	9,637
1964-65	4,049	2,210	1974-75	12,704	10,511
1965-66	4,624	2,756	1975-76	13,857	11,575
1966-67	5,312	3,388	1976-77	15,334	12,675
1967-68	6,948	4,884	1977-78	14,570	12,475
1968-69	*	6,420	1978-79	16,140	13,874

SOURCES: Z.E.Zsigmond and C.J.Wenaas, *Enrolment In Educational Institutions By Province, 1951-52 To 1980-81*, and, Statistics Canada, *Enrolment In Community Colleges* (title varies), and *Vocational And Technical Training*, and D.B.S, *Survey Of Vocational Education And Training*.

NOTES: The column "Technical Institutes & Community Colleges" includes students enroled in university transfer programs and nonvocational courses, whereas, "Vocational &Career Programs" gives enrolment in terminal vocational programs only.
*There is no figure available for 1968-69 as this was before Statistics Canada began its community college survey, and after the Zsigmond and Wenaas data period. An estimate of 7,500 would probably be fairly close.

The response of the Social Credit government to the increasing demand for more university places was to allow the system of higher education to expand as rapidly as possible to accommodate these new students. As suggested earlier, the Social Credit belief in the value of education, their commitment to provide for the "legitimate needs" of individuals, and their acceptance of the economic arguments of the human

capital model, all pushed the government in this direction. Furthermore, the expansion of the post-secondary system seemed to be merely the logical extension of the achievement of universal access to primary and secondary education which had occurred over the previous thirty years.[32] To have responded in any other manner while the province could afford the additional expenditures (thanks to the seemingly endless oil revenues), would have been simply unthinkable.

For its part, the education elite was convinced (as suggested in Chapter III) that the enrolment increases would continue for at least another decade. Demographic projections indicated that the number of 18-24 year olds would continue to increase, so that even at the then current participation rate, the number of students would seem to have to inevitably increase as well. (A drop in the participation rate was considered out of the question.) Most administrators were further convinced that the participation rate would rise substantially. For example, in his annual report as President of the University of Alberta, Max Wynman pointed out that, "When one stops to assess the accomplishments of Canadian universities during the 1960's, it can be seen that there is still much to do. University education is accessible to only about 15 per cent of the university age group, about three-tenths of the corresponding percentage for the United States. Canada must greatly increase the accessibility of its universities to the college age group...."[33] Deep in the grip of the human capital model, the education elite in Alberta was convinced that it was desirable, indeed vital, to 'catch up' with the United States, in terms of the participation rate, and that therefore enrolments could be expected to increase at an ever

accelerating rate.

For example, the influential Seastone Report predicted 47,650 full-time undergraduate students in Alberta's universities by 1978-79 and 23,350 full-time non-university post-secondary students.[34] The actual figures were 27,687 and 16,140 respectively. Undergraduate university full-time enrolment for 2005-06 was projected *"conservatively"* at 65,061, with a high estimate of 88,272 and a participation rate of 34.4%.[35] Only time will tell how far off these figures actually are, but it is interesting to note that the education elite expected enrolments to continue ever upward into the dim future. Armed with such estimates, it was not difficult for the education elite to convince the Social Credit government to plan for massive long range expansion of the university system, including an early start on Alberta's fourth university.

The Progressive Conservatives, while expressing concern over the rapidly escalating costs of higher education, were in fundamental agreement of the necessity for expanding the post-secondary system. (To have opposed it would have been politically unpopular during the sixties.) At the 1966 Tory convention, Lougheed stated: "We believe in any establishment of priorities that stresses expenditure on all aspects of education...[education] must be given the highest priority to equip younger Albertans to compete in the decade ahead."[36] As long as enrolments continued to soar, supported by a healthy economy and the human capital model, the Conservatives were constrained from protesting the costs too loudly by the overwhelming favourable public opinion enjoyed by the universities

However, the projected upward trend did not continue into the

seventies. As can be seen in Table 4-1, university enrolments began to level off in 1970-71.

For the education elite, this was an unexpected setback. Some administrators simply denied that the enrolment slowdown was a new trend, dismissing it as a temporary anomaly. The missing students, they argued, were merely 'stopping out', taking a year off from their studies to work or travel. They would be back in even greater numbers in a year or two, and the temporary shortfalls must not be allowed to postpone the necessary further expansion of the university system.[37] Others recognized that the fabulous enrolments predicted for the 1970s and 1980s were not about to materialize, but nevertheless argued that further expansion was still necessary in order to adequately accommodate the number of students already in attendance. For example, the University of Alberta was in the midst of a massive construction program when the enrolment slowdowns first appeared—which inevitably raised the question of the need for new facilities—but President Wynman pointed out that:

> This building program is enabling us to catch up on space needs that have been deferred and that have arisen from the major increases in student population over the past five years. If all of the buildings under construction were available right now, we would still be some hundreds of thousands of square feet short of the space needed for a university of our size. We have existed, but just barely, by renting space off campus, by using old huts and houses, particularly in the North Garneau area, by pressing into use every possible square foot of space suitable or otherwise, and by just doing without.[38]

In any event, the enrolment shortfalls plunged the universities into financial crisis. Each 'missing' student represented not only lost tuition, but more significantly, lost grants, since government funding was directly tied to enrolment. The universities found themselves

overstaffed and overextended and with very little idea as to how long the enrolment slowdows were likely to continue. Moreover, since the definitive projections of only the year before had proven false, many administrators were inclined to despair of ever accurately anticipating future trends. With planning dependent on budgeting, and budgeting dependent on enrolments, their inability to accurately predict enrolments left the universities in a very difficult position.

Fortunately, the Social Credit government reacted to this sudden crisis sympathetically. First, it did not apply the existing financing formulae mechanically, but instead offset the shortfalls to a certain extent; though this still left the University of Alberta, for example, $1,600,000 below expected revenues.[39] Second, the Universities Commission agreed to base future grants on projected (rather than actual) enrolments, so that universities could at least make plans for the following year with assurance that the money would actually be forthcoming.[40] Nevertheless, in spite of generous government support, the first few years of declining enrolments were difficult times for Alberta's universities.[41]

The decline itself was caused by a number of factors, but was primarily the result of a downturn in the Canadian economy and a subsequent loss of faith in the human capital model on the part of the general public. The recession in the economy meant that students had trouble getting summer jobs (even in Alberta), parents found it more difficult to finance their children's studies, and graduates could not always find suitable jobs.[42] The vocational relevance of undergraduate degrees began to be questioned, and there was widespread disillusionment with the ability of a university education to provide access to the 'good

life'. Consequently, university enrolments began to level off, while other forms of post-secondary education continued to expand.

There was a corresponding shift in the attitude of the taxpayer. The public's acceptance of the human capital model had placed on the university

> ...a level of expected performance which no institution could meet. Society adopted a creed in which more and more education for more and more people would surely cure all of the social and economic ills of the world. When, in spite of the billions of dollars spent on education, these problems seemed to intensify rather than to diminish, society wrongly assumed its educational institutions had failed. The financial support given with enthusiastic acquiescence during the 1950's and 1960's is now given with hostility and regret.[43]

It is interesting but futile to speculate on what would have been the reaction of the Social Credit government to this dual pressure of continuing enrolment shortfalls and public disillusionment with the escalating costs of higher education, had they remained in office. Perhaps they too would have been forced to reluctantly cutback on expenditures in higher education, or perhaps they would have pressed on regardless.

There is no question, however, about the Progressive Conservative reaction. Lougheed had campaigned in the 1971 election partly on the issue of the high level of Social Credit spending on health, education, and welfare, and the Tories' overwhelming victory was taken as a clear mandate to initiate cutbacks.

At the same time, the Progressive Conservative accepted the need to expand non-university post-secondary opportunities. First, as can be seen from Table 4-2, the demand for vocational education continued to increase. Graduates from the technical institutes had little diffi-

culty obtaining employment, and a certificate from NAIT or SAIT began to rival (if not replace) a university degree as the key to the 'good life'. In fact, the post-secondary system was faced for the first time with the question of granting advanced standing to university students who wanted to transfer to a technical institute, instead of the other way around.[44] Second, the Progressive Conservative policy of encouraging industrialization as their first priority seemed to dictate investment in post-secondary vocational and technical training. The labour market was oversupplied with university graduates but there was a clear need for an expanding pool of technicians.

A second issue in Alberta, as elsewhere in Canada, was that of provincial encroachment on the autonomy of the university. The vast sums of money being poured into higher education during the sixties and the rapid proliferation of campuses and new types of post-secondary institutions naturally required considerable co-ordination.

The Social Credit government had responded characteristically by creating two new commissions: the Universities Commission, and the Colleges Commission. This permitted the government an "arm's length" relationship with the universities, providing co-ordination without direct governmental control or interference.

On the whole, the education elite (with the probable exception of the Commission's members and staff) was not overly impressed with the idea.[45] First of all, the Commission format placed a barrier between the university administrators and the Cabinet. The Commission, being made up of professional educational administrators of equal standing to those in the universities, was less likely to be in awe of university personnel. Second, there was widespread feeling that the Commission was

redundant in as much as the Commission could not really have gone against the policies and decisions of the Department of Education. Finally, it was perceived as ineffectual, even within the limits of its mandate.[46]

It seems likely that both Commissions would have been repatriated to the Department of Advanced Education, even had the Social Credit government been re-elected.[47]

On the other hand, the education elite did acknowledge the need for co-ordination. The Worth Report, for example, came out very strongly for a differentiated system of higher education, with each institution playing a distinct, specialized role:

> The response to this challenge of expansion in both quantity and quality must be increasingly diversified and coordinated. Within higher education the particular role of each sector, institution and program must be clearly specified.... Concurrently, there needs to be effective role coordination to avoid gaps as well as unwarrented duplication, to eliminate mutually destructive warfare between faculties, and to facilitate student transfer and continuity in learning. Planned differentiation in mission, size and character is the path that higher education must follow if it is to maximize its contribution to the general goals of education.[48]

Such proposed differentiation obviously requires the surrender of a considerable portion of the institution's traditional autonomy. Furthermore, such differentiation represents movement away from the enlightenment model and towards the human capital and manpower models.

In any event, with the election of the Progressive Conservative government in 1971, the University and College Commissions were ordered to wind down their affairs and dissolve. The Department of Advanced Education was officially established June 2, 1972, and took over the functions of the two Commissions as well as administrating the province's

other post-secondary institutions.

The education elite watched with some trepidation. While the Universities Commission had never seemed particularly attractive when it had stood between them and the sympathetic Social Credit government, the idea of a Commission protecting university autonomy from the political encroachments of a Progressive Conservative government was much more appealing.[49] Concern reached its peak with the circulation of the proposed Adult Education Act, and subsided somewhat after its withdrawal.

The Department of Advanced Education was reorganized June 25, 1975, to become the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower.

A third issue was that of administrative reform. This was more or less the exculsive concern of the education elite. The relevant point here is that Alberta has always been in the forefront of administrative innovation and reform. The University of Alberta was the first Canadian university to elect faculty members, and later students, as full voting members of the Board of Governors, and in 1971 gave students parity with elected members of the academic staff on the General Faculties Council.

A fourth issue was that of student disaffection. On the whole, student protest in Alberta was much more muted than elsewhere in Canada, partly because Alberta may just be more conservative, and partly because students had already received a substantial say in internal university affairs. The progressive ideology of the education elite predisposed them to accept the demand for student representation as legitimate, and in the case of Athabasca University, provision for a student voice on the Governing Authority was made even before there were any students.

A fifth issue was that of the definition of the role of the university. Unlike most other provinces, however, the education elite in Alberta (or at least the Commission on Education Planning) came up with a specific answer.

In addition to the two general goals of education previously mentioned (that is, encouraging the development of a 'futures-perspective' and of 'autonomous individuals') the functions of higher education were defined as "development", "criticism", "career", "integration", and "discovery" (though not necessarily in that order).[50] The development function related to both the community and the indivdual, with colleges providing solutions and leadership in local issues, while providing the necessary training to the individual. The criticism function meant that the universities were expected to be the moral and social conscience of the society. The career function related to professional and vocational preparation. The integration function may be translated as the development of self-actualized individuals. Finally, the discovery function referred to the search for new knowledge, that is, to university research. These five functions were then assigned to the differentiated post-secondary institutions. Universities were to stress discovery, criticism, integration, and career (in that order); colleges were assigned development, integration, and career; while the technical institutes were to stress career and integration.

This is an interesting compromise between the enlightenment model and the human capital or manpower models. On the one hand, the traditional role of intellectual and social development is maintained in the integration function. The German university model finds expression in the discovery function. The criticism function again reflects the

enlightenment model. The career function acknowledges the manpower. And the development function reflects the emergent role of post-secondary institutions as social service centres.

This compromise was quite compatible with both the education elite's progressive ideology and the Social Credit populism. The Progressive Conservatives, however, would seem to favour the career function and the manpower model more heavily than either the Social Credit or education elite were prepared to, though this will be discussed in more detail in Chapter VII.

A sixth issue was that of innovation. The education elite, as previously mentioned, was extremely open to innovation, and generally had a history of adopting the latest educational advances before other provinces. For their part, the Social Credit government was prepared to underwrite the progressive experiments of the education elite, as their populist ideology stressed human resources development as a first priority, which in turn implied that the latest techniques and advances should be imported to achieve this end.

The Progressive Conservatives were reasonably open to innovation, particularly in their first years in office.[51] During this initial period they were more reliant on the advice and expertise of the education elite, and more flexible in their policies. Their administration became more conservative as they grew confident in their own priorities and more cautious of unproven expenditures. On the whole, however, they remained interested in innovations which promised to bring down the cost of higher education or increase its effectiveness. The Progressive Conservatives, like any good corporation, were prepared to fund promising research and development projects.

A seventh issue was that of the role of the federal government in higher education. Both the Social Credit and Progressive Conservative governments opposed any encroachments on provincial jursidiction in education, but the education elite generally favoured greater inter-provincial co-ordination and a greater role for the federal government, though shying away from specific proposals.[52]

In summary, then, there were three main groups involved with higher education policy in Alberta: the professional administrators, or 'education elite'; the Social Credit caucus and its advisors until the 1971 election; and the Progressive Conservative Cabinet thereafter. The education elite and the Social Credit government both favoured the human capital model and the expansion of higher education in Alberta. The Progressive Conservatives preferred the manpower model, and were concerned over the rising costs of higher education.

As elsewhere in Canada, higher education had expanded greatly during the sixties, but university enrolments had suddenly leveled off in the early seventies. A number of secondary issues had emerged as a consequence of these basic trends in enrolments, and the education elite and the governing political party responded to these developments in a manner consistent with their separate ideologies and models of higher education.

In Chapter V these developments will be related to the emergence of Athabasca University to indicate that that institution was a logical consequence of these trends, rather than a dramatic departure from standard educational practice or concerns in Alberta.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1]The term 'ideology' is used here to refer to the assumptions and preferred models of society, social relations, and the individual— particularly as these relate to education— which are shared by the members of the group.

[2]For example, the University of Toronto is still based, at least in theory, on the college system which originated in England. [See the report of the Commission on University Government, Toward Community In University Government (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970) pp. 136-163.]

It is also interesting to note that educational innovations at the elementary and secondary levels, such as open classrooms, team teaching, and the use of electives and course credit in high schools, were generally adopted in Alberta before Ontario.

[3]The Commission's report is also sometimes referred to by its subtitle, A Choice Of Futures, or alternatively, A Choice Of Futures, A Future Of Choices.

[4]The Report of the Commission on Educational Planning, The Worth Report (Edmonton: Hertig, 1972) p. 33.

[5]Ibid., p. 26.

[6]Ibid., p. 41.

[7]Ibid., pp. 37-41.

[8]The Post-Secondary Education Task Force (of the Commission on Educational Planning), Interim Proposals (Edmonton: The Commission on Educational Planning, February, 1971) pp. 109, 111.

[9]Worth Report, p. 84. This remark is buried in the middle of a paragraph in a section on the University of Alberta, but it is singled out in the official reply to the Worth Report by the Department of Advanced Education as one of the statements to be "endorsed in principle".

[10]While it is difficult to substantiate a direct connection between a belief in proselytism and a commitment to formal education on the part

of Social Credit, one may nevertheless recognize that a movement originally based on the 'study group' as the basic organizational unit (see, John Irving, The Social Credit Movement In Alberta [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959] pp. 341-343) and which was thought of as "essentially an educational enterprise" (Ibid., pp. 86; 110) until 1935, will be inclined to give education a higher priority than one which is recruited from, say, the boardrooms of the province's major corporations.

[11]William Aberhart, quoted by Irving, p. 357.

[12]Ernest Manning, A White Paper On Human Resources Development, (Edmonton: Queen's Printer, March 1967) p. 17.

[13]Ibid., p. 18.

[14]To quote from an interview with T. C. Byrne:

> Byrne: The Universities had no trouble with the Social Credit Cabinet. The Ministers were impressed and over-awed by University people to the point that they didn't tangle with them. They gave the universities pretty much what they wanted. If any of the Ministers were university graduates, they were likely to be schoolteachers.
>
> Challenge [Interviewer]: So they stood in awe of the university?
>
> Byrne: That's right. Lawyers can be contemptuous of the university because they graduated at the top of the heap, but not educators. Educators maintain identity with the university because it sets them a little apart from the heap.

T. C. Byrne, in interview with R. G. McIntosh and R. C. Bryce, "Challenge In Educational Administration", The CSA Bulletin 15 (1977) 102.

[15]John Barr, The Dynasty: The Rise And Fall Of Social Credit In Alberta (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974) pp. 217-218.

[16]The Albertan, quoted by Allan Hustak, Peter Lougheed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979) p. 83.

[17]Hustak, pp. 138, 99, 123-124; Barr, pp. 218-223, John Richards and Larry Pratt, Prairie Capitalism: Power And Influence In The New West (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979) p. 167.

[18]Richards and Pratt, pp. 148-149, 166-167.

[19]Peter Lougheed, quoted by Barr, pp. 218-219 (and also by Richards and Pratt, p. 165.)

[20]Hustak, p. 147.

[21]Richards and Pratt, pp. 163-164, Hustak, pp. 139-144.

[22]For example, the fromer Minister of Advanced Education was appointed to the Hog Marketing Board on the grounds that his complete lack of knowledge of hog marketing procedures would preclude his having any biases, while his proven administrative abilities were deemed sufficiently important to be worth ten times the usual honourarium for Board members.

[23]Nor was the education elite the only group to find its formerly preeminent position somewhat curtailed. During his first term in office, Lougheed replaced 70 per cent of all senior deputy ministers who held key positions. (Hustak, p. 140) Lougheed "tailored the government to suit himself. Although he is intensely courteous to his friends and considers their advice as imput, the decisions he makes are his and his alone." (Ibid., p. 140).

[24]Department of Advanced Education, Second Annual Report, 1972-73 (Edmonton: Queen's Printer, 1973)

[25]"I think if you examine what was proposed in the [Worth] Report in terms of what we have now, that certainly we are batting over 500. You know— if you hit over 300 you're pretty damn good, in baseball anyway." Walter Worth, personal interview. May 1979.

[26]T. C. Byrne, p. 102.

[27]Report Of The Task Force To Review Student's Contributions To The Costs Of Post-Secondary Education (Edmonton: Queen's Printer, 1978) p. 6.

[28]Ibid.

[29]There obviously were other groups, notably faculty and students, which had a stake in higher education issues during this period, but they were not involved directly at the policy making level.

[30]Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Fall Enrolments In Universities And Colleges In Canada; and Statistics Canada, Survey Of Higher Education In Canada.

[31]Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Survey of Vocational Education And Training; and Statistics Canada, Vocational And Technical Training.

[32]It is often said that if the Social Credit administration is to

be remembered for anything, it will be for the construction of roads and schools. Their accomplishment of centralizing and upgrading elementary and secondary education in the then largely rural province was no mean feat.

[33]Max Wynman, "Report Of The President", Annual Report Of The Governors Of The University Of Alberta, 1969-70, p. 41.

[34]Don Seastone, Economic And Demographic Futures In Education In Alberta, 1970-2005 (Edmonton: Human Resources Research Council, 1971) pp. 66, 68.

[35]Ibid., p. 66.

[36]Peter Lougheed, quoted by Barr, p. 217. Note the human capital model implicit in even this brief statement.

[37]T. C. Byrne.

[38]Max Wynman, "Report Of The President", The Annual Report Of The Governors Of The University Of Alberta, 1970-71, 54.

[39]Ibid., p. 52.

[40]W. A. S. Smith, "Report Of The President", Annual Report Of The University Of Lethbridge, 1970-71, p. 7.

[41]Max Wynman, 1971-72, p. 46.

[42]Max Wynman, 1970-71, p. 52.

[43]Ibid., pp 54-55.

[44]Worth, personal interview.

[45]Byrne, pp. 63-64.

[46]Ibid., p. 63.

[47]Ibid., p. 61.

[48]Worth Report

[49]Wynman, 1972-73; and Byrne, p. 64-65.

[50]The following discussion is based on the Worth Report, pp. 55-58.

[51]Byrne, pp. 93, 102.

[52]Worth Report, pp. 148-149.

CHAPTER V

THE EMERGENCE OF ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

This chapter will examine the emergence of Athabasca University, focusing primarily on a descriptive historical analysis of the forces and factors which contributed to its evolution and survival.

THE ORIGINAL IMPETUS AND MANDATE

On June 25, 1970, Order-in-Council 1206/70 was signed which stated:

> 1. That a university shall be established solely on a site to be provided by the Alberta Government three miles North East of the *Town of St Albert*, the name of which shall be Athabasca University.
>
> 2. That while Athabasca University will be a full member of the provincial university system under the Universities Act, its curriculum and instructional objectives will be subject to the following conditions
>
> (a) The *primary mission* of the University will be the development of *excellence in undergraduate studies.*
>
> (b) Undergraduate studies will be *limited to the arts, sciences, and education,* with particular attention to the application of the humanities and social sciences in related professional fields.
>
> (c) The development of a program of graduate studies is not expected to take place in the immediate future. Development of such a program will be contingent upon the approval of the Alberta Universities Commission and the amendment of this Order-In-Council.
>
> (d) The University is expected to explore and institute if deemed desirable, *new procedures in curriculum organization and instruction.*
>
> 3. That an Interim Governing Authority be and is hereby appointed to undertake the planning of the university and other such actions as are deemed essential to make the university operative....[emphasis added][1]

The three key points in this new university's mandate were that it

was to be located near Edmonton, a city which already had one university; that it was to be limited to undergraduate studies in the arts, science, and education; and that it was to be innovative in curriculum design.

The single most important factor behind the creation of Athabasca University was, of course, the explosive increase in university enrolments during the 1960s. Table 5-1 shows that full-time undergraduate enrolment in Alberta quadrupled from 6,583 to 25,983 in the ten year period 1960-61 to 1970-71.[2] As mentioned in Chapter IV, these dramatic increases had already resulted in a vigorous building program at the University of Alberta, the Calgary campus being recognized as a separate university, and the upgrading of the university transfer program of Lethbridge College to full university status. Nevertheless, the projected enrolments for the 1970s indicated that there would be a need for a fourth university in Alberta within three years.[3]

Once having made the decision to establish a fourth university, the Social Credit government had two options: ither they could locate the new university in the area where the greatest population and enrolment increases were anticipated; or they could site it in an area of less dense population which was not currently being served by a university.[4] There was considerable pressure for the government to choose the latter from communities which had a public college and hoped to see it upgraded to university status as had happened in Lethbridge.[5] The presence of a university would have marked economic benefits for its host community, and could stimulate the overall economic development of the region which would eventually create additional enrolments for the new campus.[6] However, the immediacy and scale of the anticipated enrolment crisis at the University of Alberta led the government to choose the former option.

TABLE 5-1

FULL-TIME ENROLMENT IN REGULAR SESSION
IN ALBERTA UNIVERSITIES, 1960-61 TO 1970-71

Year	University of Alberta			University of Calgary			University of Lethbridge	Totals	
	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total	Undergraduate	Under-graduate	Graduate
1960-61	5,511	557	6,068	1,073	10	1,083		6,583	567
1961-62	6,198	610	6,808	1,432	11	1,443		7,630	621
1962-63	6,791	626	7,417	1,714	18	1,732		8,505	644
1963-64	7,541	734	8,275	2,048	60	2,108		9,499	794
1964-65	8,394	940	9,334	2,471	116	2,587		10,865	1,056
1965-66	9,149	1,125	10,274	3,070	198	3,268		12,219	1,323
1966-67	10,207	1,287	11,494	3,774	334	4,108		13,981	1,616
1967-68	11,478	1,549	13,027	4,521	459	4,980	638	16,637	2,008
1968-69	13,383	1,799	15,182	6,142	628	6,770	1,024	20,549	2,427
1969-70	15,266	2,088	17,354	7,172	790	7,962	1,261	23,699	2,878
1970-71	16,187	2,158	18,345	8,387	850	9,237	1,409	25,983	3,008

SOURCE: The Alberta Universities Commission, *First Annual Report,*

As can be seen in Table 5-1, enrolments at the University of Alberta had tripled in ten years, and with 18,345 students in 1970-71, its enrolment was approximately twice that of the University of Calgary. Furthermore, an enrolment ceiling of 25,000 had been set as the limit of effective operation at the University of Alberta,[7] but Seastone's report was forecasting that number by 1973-74, and as many as 35,525 by 1980-81.[8] Population projections estimated Edmonton's population as 600,000 by the mid-seventies, an increase equivalent to a city of 250,000.[9] The government was forced to conclude that "no other region in the Province has, or will have, equivalent demands for university accommodation within the next decade."[10]

Similarly, the decision to have Athabasca University specialize in arts, science and education was based on the fact that these were the fields with the largest enrolments. Table 5-2 shows enrolment by faculty at the University of Alberta, 1966-67 to 1970-71. It can be seen that in 1970-71, arts, science and education accounted for 62.8 per cent of the undergraduate enrolment, and that they had experienced increases of 30 to 50 per cent in the previous five years alone. Obviously, these were the areas in which Athabasca University could best relieve some of the enrolment pressure from the University of Alberta.

At the same time, Athabasca University was prohibited from competing in fields where the University of Alberta's facilities were adequate to meet current and projected demands. Like American four year colleges, Athabasca University would provide basic undergraduate education while leaving graduate and specialized professional studies to its senior partner.

Thus, the rapidly increasing enrolments, both actual and projected, can be seen to be the major factor in, first, Athabsaca University's initial

TABLE 5-2

FULL-TIME ENROLMENT BY FACULTY
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA, 1966-67 TO 1970-71

Year	Arts	Education	Science	Commerce	Engineering	Agriculture	Graduate	All Others	Total
1966-67	1,926	2,960	1,419	715	1,022	306	1,282	1,834	11,464
1967-68	2,268	3,205	1,600	764	1,124	353	1,549	2,129	12,992
1968-69	2,736	3,841	2,015	924	1,161	366	1,817	2,433	15,293
1969-70	3,099	4,070	2,417	1,089	1,331	376	2,088	2,872	17,342
1970-71	3,091	4,236	2,830	1,118	1,380	422	2,158	3,102	18,337

SOURCE: University of Alberta, *Summary of Statistics, 1972-73.*

creation; second, the decision to locate it in Edmonton, where the major population and enrolment increases were expected; and third, the university's limitation to arts, science and education, the faculties with the greatest anticipated growth.

A second major factor in the creation of Athabasca University was the Social Credit caucus' ideological commitment to education. As suggested in previous Chapters, increased demand for university admission does not automatically and inevitably lead to university expansion. The government could have responded by sharply raising admission requirements, raising tuition, or otherwise restricting access to higher education so as to retain previous enrolment levels. However, for the Social Credit government there was no question but that they should endeavor to do everything in their power to meet the demand for higher education and perhaps even encourage it.

For example, the first four points of the government's "general guidelines" for post-secondary education policy announced in 1970 were:

> 1. All Albertans who are capable of benefiting from undergraduate education in one or another of Alberta's universities should be provided with the opportunity of doing so.
> 2. While university research and graduate study are important, first priority in university effort should be placed on undergraduate instruction and professional instruction after the first degree.
> 3. The government considers that all fees charged by universities should be maintained at their present levels.
> 4. There is a need for an expanding provincial university system. At the same time, however, universities must accept increasing responsibility for accountability in costs and for the establishment of priorities in expenditures consistent with the social and economic needs of the province.[11]

Here can be clearly seen both the populist commitment to meeting the legitimate needs of individuals and the human capital model's investment and accountability approaches to higher education. Given these policy commitments (especially

the priority given to the provision of undergraduate education) and given the nature of the enrolment projections, the establishment of Athabasca University was a logical development.

The restriction of the new university to undergraduate studies is significant. At a practical level, this restriction was dictated by the need to satisfy the demand for undergraduate education without incurring the costs of developing a full scale multiversity. To quote then Minister of Education, Robert Clark:

> Universities...are becoming highly expensive institutions. In addition to teaching they are expanding their research facilities.... It is obvious that when a new university is created we set in motion developments which ultimately end not only in the creation of a teaching institution but of a research institution as well. The establishment of undergraduate education ultimately leads to a superstructure of graduate study and graduate research. The question we have to face then, is *how many research institutes of this kind can a province sustain?*
>
> ...at a time when more and more students wish an undergraduate education in a university we need to ask ourselves, do we add units to the university system or do we seek some other kind of institution which will provide a teaching service but not necessarily create a new superstructure of graduate study and research? ...creating research institutes to provide instruction for undergraduate students does not seem the wisest choice open to us.[12] [Emphasis in original]

At a more fundamental level, however, this has important implications for the university.

First, the restriction to undergraduate studies is necessarily also a restriction on the institution's autonomy, since it is not to be allowed to determine the direction of its own development. Provincial encroachment on university autonomy in this case has gone beyond a mere demand for accountability to the actual dictation of the institution's function and nature.

Second, the differentiation of the university system into specialized

institutions represents a shift in the definition of the role of the university. The "discovery" function, for example, would appear to have been denied to Athabasca University, and with it goes part of the enlightenment model.

Third, at the same time, by relieving the University of Alberta of some of its responsibility for accommodating arts, science, and education enrolments, it is effectively alienating the 'liberal arts' function of the university away from the province's main campus, since the University of Alberta will have a growing proportion of professional vocational programs as further increases in liberal arts enrolments are drawn off to Athbasca University.

Fourth and finally, as a satellite campus restricted to undergraduate studies, it is clearly the junior partner in the university system. This, as suggested in Chapter II, presents the danger that it would become the lowest rung on the prestige hierarchy; a lesser institution which accommodates the demand for higher education from lower class and minority students, while allowing the larger campus to maintain its elite status and clientele.

Thus, it can be seen that what started out as a simple economic expedient to meet the demand for undergraduate education without establishing a multiversity, could have turned out to have had a number of latent functions.

In any event, the enrolment increases and Social Credit populist ideology were the two main factors in the establishment of Athabasca University and the nature of its original restriction to undergraduate studies in arts, science, and education. Similarly, the new university's mandate to innovate in curriculum design, etc., reflected the education

elite's commitment to innovation (as discussed in Chapter IV), which had four main reasons for emphasizing innovation in the creation of Athabasca University.

First, there was the unique opportunity for experimentation provided by the fact that Athabasca University was to be built from scratch. There were no previously existing physical facilities to limit design, no previously existing staff to resist change, no previously existing curriculum to be modified. Furthermore, when one is starting a new institution, it is obviously better to turn to the most recent developments and the most uptodate models avialable.

Second, there was an explicit desire to avoid building another 'Simon Fraser'. The Province of British Columbia, reacting to similar enrolment pressures, had designed and built Simon Fraser University practically overnight, and the resulting instituion had come under heavy attack as a 'rush job' which had failed to take advantage of recent advances in educational design.

Third, there was a sincere desire to alleviate student unrest and alienation through the design of more appropriate curriculum and facilities for the seventies.

Fourth and most significant was the need to differentiate between similar undergraduate programs at the two Edmonton Universities. The designers of Athabasca University were aware of the problem in allocating students to the two campuses,

> There are several ways by which Athabasca might secure its quota of students. The region might be divided into Athabasca and Alberta attendance areas much as is done within school districts. One would hesitate to accept a position on such a boundary commission! Another approach might be for Athabasca to accept those students who could

> not find accommodation in the University of Alberta, an admirable arrangement for the latter, if not for the former university.[13]

The solution was seen to lie in Athabasca University's mandate to innovate in curriculum design. By providing an alternative to traditional university programs, Athabasca University would be able to attract students without recourse to arbitrary geographical boundries or having to accept only University of Alberta rejects.

> One of its [Athabasca University] primary aims must be to provide an alternative route in higher education to those students in the northern constituency who wish to follow programs in arts, science or education. Those who elect to attend Athabasca University should do so from choice rather than necessity.[14]

The education elite, then, pressed for innovation at Athabasca Univeristy not only to provide the latest and best models for instruction, but also to give the individual a choice of programs and to thereby better meet the needs of various individuals.[15]

Thus having accounted for the nature of Athabasca University's original mandate, it can be seen that at this stage it did not represent a radical departure from current trends or practice in higher education in Alberta. On the contrary, in the context of the day, it was a predictable, almost routine, development.

TRADITIONAL INNOVATION

Members of the Interim Governing Authority appointed by the Order-In-Council immediately began planning the new university, commencing with their first meeting, July 2-3, 1970. At that meeting a representative of the Department of Public Works made a presentation indicating that Athabasca University could expect to have 10,000 full-time students

by 1979 and plant expenditures of $70,000,000.[16] At the second meeting, it was proposed that sufficient facilities be ready by the fall of 1973 to accommodate 2,000 students.[17] These figures were later revised to 500 students by 1973 and capital expenditures of between $80,000,000 and $100,000,000 to accommodate 10,000 students by 1979.[18] Clearly, Athabasca University was to be a major campus.

Members of the Authority visited a number of other universities for ideas to incorporate in Athbasca's academic design. These included the Universities of Calgary, Lethbridge, Waterloo, Scarborough, Trent, York, and Simon Fraser in Canada; the Green Bay campus of the University of Wisconsin and the University of California in the United States; and the University of Sussex and the Open University in England.[19] Members seemed particularly impressed with their tour of Green Bay.

Planning had two major related focuses, one on the physical plant to be erected at the sight in St Albert, and the other on the academic design. By May 1971, planning had progressed to the point that Athabasca University's academic model was articulated in a pamphlet entitled, A.U.'s Academic Concept.[20]

The academic concept called for an interdisciplinary, future-oriented, approach which stressed self-instruction and a British-style tutorial. The University was to be organized in "modules", a self-contained unit of roughly 600 students and 40 academics, plus support staff. Research was to be project oriented, with special emphasis placed on community service or "outreach". Curriculum was to be organized on a "3+1" basis, wherein a student could obtain general knowledge and a degree after three years, or specialize in a vocational

fourth year for a professional degree. In sum, the academic plan called for a cluster college style undergraduate university emphasizing learning over teaching and incorporating the best features of British, American, and Canadian higher education models.

The progressive ideology of the education elite is clearly reflected in this model. In addition to the overall commitment to innovation, there were a number of specific elements which later turned up in the Worth Report. "Education for the next three decades must be oriented to the future"[21] was an early formulation of the Worth's Report's "futures-perspective". The "community outreach" service proposed in the Academic Concept was what the Worth Report referred to as the "development mission" of college level institutions. In the Worth Report, the development of "autonomous individuals" is given high priority and described as "the normal result of an education that is moral as well as intellectual and aesthetic", and that autonomous individuals "must acknowledge the limitations of self, reconcile his individuality with his membership in society and dedicate his allegiance to values more comprehensive than just his own."[22] Compare this to the declarations of the Academic Concept that "education must be moral as well as intellectual" and "while education for the decades ahead must not overlook the individualism implicit in the liberal arts, its commitments must nonetheless extend to that of serving as 'a vehicle for the realization of self in society'."[23] Similarly, the education elite's belief in the individual's ability to take command of the direction of his own life and education is seen in the Academic Concept's position that "those responsible for the structures and processes of education for the decades ahead should stress learning rather than teaching."[24]

There is also an explicit discussion of the new university's role in vocational preparation:

> Education for the future makes no distinctions between liberal and vocational....
>
> No educational institution whether it be university, college, technical institute, or high school should ignore the importance of students' vocational choices and preparation. The university must assume more responsibility for helping students find useful vocational outlets for their education, and for making them aware that particular fields of study, though enriching in themselves, do not readily lead to employment possibilities. The university must accept responsibility for the vocational preparation not only of graduates of its professional schools, but also of those who have followed more general programs.[25]

This obviously represents a commitment to the human capital/manpower model on the part of the original Athabasca University.

The student body was expected to be primarily urban (mainly from the Edmonton area), recently graduated from high school with matriculation, and middle or lower-middle class. Student residences were planned to accommodate 15 per cent of the student population.[26]

In comparison with the institution Athabasca University was eventually to become, the original academic design and its anticipated constituency were not very different from that of other Alberta universities, though it was perceived as rather radical at the time.[27] The proposed innovations were primarily at the level of operational detail, as opposed to a fundamental change in the university's 'mission' or nature. This phase of the university's development may be termed one of "traditional innovation".[28]

REVERSALS

On August 30, 1971, the Progressive Conservative party replaced the Social Credit government in Alberta. This immediately removed one of the three major supporting forces behind Athabasca University (the other

TABLE 5-3

FULL-TIME ENROLMENT IN REGULAR SESSION
IN ALBERTA UNIVERSITIES, 1970-71 TO 1978-79

Year	University of Alberta			University of Calgary			University of Lethbridge	Totals	
	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total	Undergraduate	Undergraduate	Graduate
1970-71	16,179	2,158	18,337	8,387	850	9,237	1,409	25,975	3,008
1971-72	16,152	2,091	18,243	8,349	824	9,173	1,218	25,179	2,915
1972-73	15,753	2,004	17,757	7,989	791	8,780	1,076	24,818	2,795
1973-74	16,657	1,867	18,524	8,525	753	9,278	1,086	26,268	2,620
1974-75	17,305	1,850	19,155	8,782	796	9,578	1,154	27,241	2,646
1975-76	17,824	1,912	19,736	10,057	893	10,950	1,336	29,217	2,805
1976-77	17,951	2,068	20,019	9,925	939	10,864	1,483	29,359	3,007
1977-78	17,461	2,030	19,491	9,863	942	10,805	1,531	28,855	2,972
1978-79	16,757	2,007	18,764	9,714	930	10,644	1,439	27,910	2,937

SOURCE: University of Alberta, Office of Institutional Research and Planning, *DataBook, 1978-79*, p. 12.

two being the educational elite and escalating enrolments). The Conservative government called for a review of all capital planning, including that of Athabasca University, practically the moment they took office.

Unlike the Social Credit party, the Progressive Conservatives were not inclined to view further expansion of the province's university system sympathetically. As discussed in Chapter IV, they expressed concern, if not outright horror, at the escalating costs of higher education, and a capital expenditure in the neighbourhood of $100,000,000 for a new university appeared extravagant indeed. If cuts had to be made in the province's education spending, the not yet existent university seemed the obvious place to begin.

Unfortunately for the University, while its future was under review by the new Progressive Conservative government, the second major factor supporting its creation also collapsed. Instead of continued rapid increases in the number of applications for admission to the province's universities, enrolment suddenly leveled off. The anticipated increases failed to materialize, leaving the University of Alberta overstaffed and over-extended, and removing any pressing need for a second Edmonton campus. Table 5-3 shows full-time enrolments at the province's universities, 1970-71 to 1978-79. It can be seen from this Table that enrolments at the University of Alberta have stablized in the 18-20,000 range, well below the 25,000 student ceiling.

Clearly, Athabasca University in its originally proposed form was doomed. Had the Social Credit government been re-elected, it is possible that the project would have carried through in spite of falling enrolments. Sheer momentum, plus the education elite's support for the new university's

academic concept,[29] might have been sufficient to sustain Athabasca University, though on a substantially reduced scale. Alternatively, had enrolments continued to soar at the predicted rate, the Conservative government might have been forced by public pressure to bring Athabasca University into operation. However, the combination of a new government committed to reviewing *all* capital expenditures, and slowing enrolments was obviously going to prove too much for the fledgling institution.[30]

It did not take the Governing Authority long to realize this. At their September meeting, members "spent some time discussing the enrolment slowdowns and their implication for Athabasca University."[31] At the October meeting, the President of Athabasca University had to remind members that officially, "the Authority had been directed by the Government to open in the fall of 1973 and in the absence of directions to the contrary, activity on design work was absolutely necessary."[32] The Authority Chairman urged members to "avoid any negativism concerning Athabasca University's future."[33] The President also reported at the October meeting that he had met with the new Minister of Advanced Education. The Minister had told him that "no position had been adopted by the government on Athabasca University" as yet, but that "nevertheless, Athabasca University represented a capital expenditure and would, in consequence, be reviewed by the Government."[34] The President told the Authority that "it was difficult at this time to assess where the opposition to Athabasca University was coming from, if indeed there was any opposition. A number of rumours were in circulation concerning the future of Athabasca University."[35]

This period of uncertainty was quickly followed by worse news as members of the Authority received the order, on November 1, 1971, to

suspend all physical planning related to the St Albert site, though academic planning and architectural design not specific to that site could continue.[36] The letter was leaked to the Edmonton Journal which carried two stories and a very supportive editorial on Athabasca University on November 2, 1971. Now even the public recognized that Athabasca University was in serious trouble.

There was also a great deal of speculation that Athabasca University was to be relocated in Red Deer.[37] Not only had the enrolment slowdown at the University of Alberta made an Edmonton area site less attractive, and the city of Red Deer the obvious next choice since Red Deer College had been lobbying for degree granting status since the establishment of the University of Lethbridge, but the Minister of Advanced Education's home riding was in that city. Nevertheless, the need for a fourth university anywhere in the province, especially at a cost of $100,000,000 was sharply questioned by the government.

The University entered a limbo of uncertainty as it continued academic planning without any indication from the Progressive Conservatives that it would ever take on a physical existence. Discussions at the Authority's meetings tended to become a little unreal to members as they awaited a firm decision from the government one way or the other. At the January 20, 1972 meeting:

> President Byrne indicated that the most significant issue at the moment was the future of Athabasca University.... He said that his personal view was that a fourth university was needed in Alberta as fast as possible, but he noted that the evidence to support his position was very difficult to obtain.
> ...Mrs. Decore suggested that there were three levels of choice. First, the government must endorse or reject the idea of a fourth university and that this decision was needed immediately. Secondly, the question of when the fourth university...should be opened and this decision was needed soon. Finally, the question of a site for the new university was the third choice that needed to be

made and appeared to be last in the hierarchy.

The Chairman commented that there was a fourth alternative inasmuch as the government could choose to make no decision. Mrs. Decore felt that the government ought to be made aware of the implications of making no decision with respect to Athabasca University.[38]

A decision was finally made and announced in the Legislature on May 30, 1972, though in some respects it was more of a nondecision. The Minister of Advanced Education announced that all physical planning was suspended for the foreseeable future, but that the Governing Authority would undertake a pilot project:

> The Government is not prepared at this time to indicate a specific site for the fourth university. Nor is the Government ready to make a commitment on the exact date for its opening. We prefer to await and examine university enrolment trends for the next two or three years before making any such announcement.
>
> On the other hand, the Government recognizes that time is necessary to plan a university.... Accordingly, we are approving in general the proposal of the Athabasca University Governing Authority to continue planning by undertaking a pilot project which would test in a practical setting various dimensions of the Athabasca University model. This pilot study would, in effect, be a research and development project in advanced education.
>
> The pilot project would extend over the next four to five years. The first two years would be spent in assembling the physical material and human resources necessary to undertake the developmental study. The final three years would constitute the study proper. The project would involve a group of approximately 250 students (a college in miniature) with the necessary academic and professional staff operating in temporary quarters....
>
> (1) The pilot project will test the Athabasca University model through direct experience with its various dimensions in a manner not unlike the use of industrial pilot projects which assess the effectiveness of planning.
>
> (2) A pilot project of this type may provide information of value to other advanced education institutions within the provincial system and to the Department of Advanced Education.
>
> (3) The testing of new ideas in advanced education will keep Albertans informed of possible directions for change and improvement.
>
> (4) When the enrolment pressures in our universities again increase, it should be possible to move from the pilot model to a full-fledged undergraduate university with reasonable speed.[39]

THE PILOT PROJECT

The decision to move to a pilot project is significant for three reasons.

First, it removed the need to make a final decision on Athabasca University's future for several years. For the Progressive Conservatives, this meant that any potential controversy over the dismantling of Athabasca University could be defused for an indefinite period, while at the same time ensuring that they would not get caught off guard should enrolments sudddenly skyrocket again, as some experts were still predicting. Furthermore, there was the very real possibility that the pilot project might produce some worthwhile results for a very small financial investment, and so at relatively little risk. For the University, it meant a renewed lease on life, even if the lease was a little short and somwhat different from that initially envisaged. In the words of one informant, "the government bought itself some peace, and the University bought itself some time."[40]

Second, having lost two of the major supports for its original mandate, those of Social Credit ideology and rapidly increasing enrolments, only the innovative emphasis of the education elite's ideology remained. It should not, therefore, be surprising that the Authority's new mandate dealt exclusively with its innovative function.

Third, the concept of a pilot project fits in very well with the Progressive Conservative's corporate approach to provincial management. It is interesting to note in this regard the explicit reference in the Minister's announcement to the use of pilot projects in industry.

The University, largely in the person of its President, responded very quickly to this new mandate with a detailed proposal for the project. As indicated in the Ministerial announcement, this involved the establish-

ment of a "college in miniature" operating out of rented quarters. It was still expected that the project would have a physical campus and that the major thrust of the innovations to be tested would revolve around experimentation with tutorials, learning systems, and other features of the original Athabasca University model. In other words, the pilot project at this stage was still involved with 'traditional innovation'.

This academic concept was spelled out in a document entitled Athabasca University: An Experiment in Practical Planning, which was adopted as official policy by the Governing Authority September 28, 1972.[41] For the most part, this new statement was merely a reworking of the original Academic Concept, but for the first time the student body was described as having three components. In addition to recently matriculated 18-24 year olds, this revised model included both on-campus adults (in their 30s and 40s) and extra-mural students.

> A third group will be off campus or extra-mural students. Unable to attend as regular day students, these students, if within commuting distance, may use the services of the university in evening or on week-ends. If not, they may secure materials by whatever means of communication is readily available. Dr. Walter Worth in his report A Choic of Futures outlines possibilities for this group in his proposals for an Alberta Academy.[42]

However, this constitutes little more than foreshadowing, since there is very little emphasis placed on the potential of distance education in the model. Correspondence education is introduced here (almost as an afterthought) only when there is no other way of reaching the student. Furthermore, the proposal states that "the largest group will no doubt continue to be the 18- to 24-year old group."[43]

Work progressed on establishing the pilot project with the University

commissioning a study on staff selection by L. W. Downey Research and Associates (formerly the Director of the Alberta Human Resources Research Council).[44] However, in early October of 1972, the University was approached by the Cabinet Committee on Education to mount a newspaper course. The University of San Diego had recently developed a successful course delivered through the medium of a daily newspaper, supplemented by various additional materials. The course had proved to be both popular academically and with the paper's general readership. Here was an obvious opportunity for Athabasca University to produce a useful and immediately visible output at relatively little cost.[45]

The Department of Advanced Education and the Edmonton Journal were both enthusiastic about the proposal, but some members of the Governing Authority were skeptical. They had believed that they would be on the board of a major university and were not quite reconciled to the idea of a pilot project when they suddenly found themselves involved in a sort of correspondence course.[46] The President argued that the proposed course was fully consistent with both the university's mandate and its academic model, and would provide much needed positive publicity if managed well.[47] Amidst some grumbling over the "precipitous manner" in which the course was being undertaken and some concern over the practical problems of financing and organizing the course by September 1973, the Authority agreed.[48]

This was a key decision, for the newpaper course proved to be the 'thin edge of the wedge' of a move to an open university model. By December 1972, "a shift in emphasis" had occured in the University's pilot project such that the University had become committed to:

> ...the delivery of these learning series to adult students who by reason of employment or other obligations are unable to attend other universities and who would ordinarily be considered part-time, off-campus students.[49]

That is, the pilot project had changed from a "college in miniature" experimenting in 'traditional innovation', to a non-campus experiment in distance education dealing with primarily adult students.

Again the President argued that this shift was consistent with both the university's mandate to innovate and its original academic model. Like the original academic concept, the open university approach would emphasize the production of learning packages for self-instruction, an interdisciplinary context, and the latest advances in educational technology. The switch to distance education would only involve two major changes from the original academic concept: First, the abandonment of a physical campus in favour of home-based learning, and second, the target population would consist of adult learners as opposed to the anticipated 18-24 year age group.[50]

It is interesting to note that by switching to the part-time adult student who could not attend a traditional campus, Athabasca University neatly side-stepped the whole issue of falling enrolments. The original target population having failed to materialize, Athabasca University sought a completely new student population.

Athabasca University continued to plan its pilot project, but with its new emphasis on home-based learning it entered a new phase of experimentation. The first open university in Canada, and trailing the pioneering British Open University by only two years (and well before any of the studies and literature on that institution was readily

available), Athabasca University became truly innovative.

Again, Downey Research and Associates were commissioned to undertake a study, this time on the market for "non-conventional" forms of higher education in Alberta. While not conclusive, the study proved generally favourable.[51] Downey was also made responsible for undertaking the general evaluation of the Athabasca University pilot project, and again turned in a generally positive report.[52]

The university successfully, if unspectacularly, mounted a course on world ecology in the Edmonton Journal, commencing in September 1973. By September 1974 the university had three introductory correspondence courses to offer the public, and launched an extensive publicity campaign to recruit students.[53] Again, the university achieved satisfactory but unspectacular results, with 534 course registrations by year's end.[54]

In January of 1975, the President prepared a position paper on Athabasca University's mandate, which was submitted to the government. The paper had two major themes. First, it simply described the university's role:

> The teaching function of Athabasca University is being performed through its developmental and production processes, and through its student support services (telephone tutorials, small group discussions, general assemblies). The research function is being undertaken through the assessments of these innovative thrusts in higher education, and through critical inquiry related to the development, publication, and delivery of interdisciplinary programs and courses.[55]

Furthermore, since all of Athabasca's activities were in a sense off-campus, there was no distinction for it between its regular function and community outreach. Because its students were still performing their usual roles in the community (instead of adopting the full-time role of student), the university was automatically fulfilling the "develop-

ment" function. Finally, Athabasca University was also fulfilling part of the role of the proposed (in the Worth Report) Alberta Academy by providing credit co-ordination at the post-secondary level, that is, granting advanced standing for courses taken at a variety of other institutions.[56]

The second theme of the paper was that it was absolutely necessary for Athabasca University to maintain its status as a university. This, it was argued, was important in order to attract top quality staff, and to be able to influence and provide service to other post-secondary institutions.[57] The point here was that Athabasca University's status was somewhat vague at this time, since it was described as a "pilot project" in advaced education, and while it was performing the functions of a university, this lack of permanence robbed it of much of its prestige. (It is also possible that there may have been some concern over Athabasca being demoted to an 'academy', in as much as it had adopted part of the proposed Alberta Academy's role, but this was probably a minor consideration.)

The government replied in June 1975 with Athabasca University: A Proposed Role And Mandate. On the whole, it accepted the University's proposals, but was a bit too specific in detailing the University's relationship with the Alberta Educational Communications Corporation (hereafer, ACCESS) for the President's liking.[58] With the rephrasing of those sections, the University and the government had reached basic agreement on Athabasca's new mandate.

On November 3, 1975, the government announced approval in principle of the establishment of Athabasca University as a permanent baccalaureate level university.[59] While the University was not acctually officially

incorporated until April 1978, this marked the end of its period of uncertainty, and the successful achievement of its new mandate.

SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT OF A MANDATE

At this point it would be useful to indicate the processes and major factors involved in Athabasca University successfully negotiating permanent status.

An obvious prerequisite for the achievement of permanent status was the success of the pilot project in producing courses and attracting students. Had the university proved unable to turn out quality course materials or unable to find students interested in their offerings, the pilot project and the University would have both been terminated.[60] However, it is extremely unlikely that the University's success here was solely responsible for achieving permanent status. This is therefore a necessary but not sufficient factor.

More important perhaps was the appointment of Dr. T. C. Byrne as first President of Athabasca University. Dr. Byrne had previously been Deputy Minister of Education, and Superintendent before that, and this background provided him not only with the necessary experience in dealing with government departments, but also an invaluable network of contacts throughout the Alberta education community. Dr. Bryne was not merely a member, but an acknowledged leader of Alberta's education elite:

> Tim Byrne was widely known as *the* man in Alberta public education. He had been a teacher, principal, superintendent of schools, high school inspector, chief superintendent of education, deputy minister, and now a university president. It was commonly held that in his years in power there was very little that happened in public education in the province which hadn't felt the effects of Tim's "fine Italian hand".
>
> Afterall, he had occupied extremely sensitive positions

> and probably knew more "behind the scenes" facts than any other person in Alberta.[61]

This, plus his personal abilities as a negotiator, gave Athabasca University a significant edge in dealing with the new Progressive Conservative government.

This is most clearly illustrated by his participation in the Red Deer College Inquiry. Shortly after the Progressive Conservatives had come to power, Red Deer College had erupted into open conflict and become a major political issue. Several attempts at negotiating a settlement between the staff and the principal had failed, including an attempt at direct intervention on the part of the Minister of Advanced Education, whose home riding was in Red Deer. Eventually resorting to an official Inquiry, the Minister chose Dr. Byrne to head it. Byrne was the logical choice not only because of his standing in the education elite and his administrative background, but also because the hiatus in Athabasca University's development at that point left him with the time to undertake the position. Dr. Byrne was extremely efficient in this capacity and resolved the dispute quickly and effectively.[62] The Minister was very favourably impressed, and thereafter was inclined to respect Byrne's opinions and weigh his suggestions carefully.[63] This was obviously to Athabasca University's advantage. To the degree that Dr. Byrne was unassailable, so was Athabasca University.

It is difficult to assess just how vital was Byrne's appointment as Athabasca's first President. Most of those interviewed considered it to be one of the most, if not *the* most, important factors in Athabasca University's survival.[64] Without Byrne's skills as a negotiator and his informal contacts with key figures in education, it is questionable

that Athabasca University would have survived long enough to become a pilot project, or having reached that stage, successfully shifted to an open university model. On the other hand, it is clearly not the only consideration in Athabasca University's survival; so once again, all that can be said is that this was a necessary but not sufficient factor.

Another key individual at this point was Dr. W. Worth. Author of the influential Worth Report, Dr. Worth was being considered as a possible candidate for Dean of Instruction at Athabasca University, and as a probable successor to Byrne as President on the latter's retirement,[65] when he accepted the position of Deputy Minister of Advanced Education. Members of the Authority recognized that Worth "...has considerable political influence and has evolved through his report a design which is completely consistent with the academic concept of Athabasca University."[66] He undoubtedly served Athabasca University as an invaluable ally in the inside of the Department.[67]

A related factor was the Worth Report itself. As suggested in Chapter IV, the Worth Report represented a consensus of the education elite, and it explicitly endorsed the original academic concept of Athabasca University:

> The Commission On Education Planning strongly endorses the academic concept or model that has been advanced for this institution. Athabasca includes among its aims the personalization of learning, the binding together of community and university for mutual benefit and a 12 month continuous operation. These aims promise to give voice to many of the changes in higher and further education outlined in subsequent sections of this report....
>
> While the need for the development of Athabasca University is not as urgent as it was thought to be when the institution was established, the recent slow-down in university enrolment growth does not constitute sufficient reason for delaying initial construction.[68]

The education elite, then, can be seen to be supportive of Athabasca University. This ideological support within the education establishment, and particularly with the Department of Advanced Education, provided a balance to the ideological opposition within the Conservative caucus. Specifically, the government is necessarily dependent, at least to some degree, on the reports of its educational administrators (especially in their first years in office), and these were invariably supportive of Athabasca University. To quote Worth:

> ...and then the other group which carried it [the pilot project concept] forward were some of the officials in the Department of Advanced Education, like Reno Bosetti, currently the A.D.M. for Administrative Services, and Barry Snowden who is now on staff over there [Vice-President of Athabasca University] and these two guys were very instrumental in preparing all sorts of documentation that went before Cabinet through Jim Foster [Minister of Advanced Education] to try to convince government to invest a few hundred thousand dollars---to maintain some investment in it.[69]

Had these key individuals *not* been favourably inclined towards Athabasca University, there probably would have been no one to provide the positive feedback necessary to counterbalance the Progressive Conservative government's apparent opposition to further expansion of the university system.

Furthermore, the proposal for the Alberta Academy (which was to function as an open university/college and credit co-ordinating institution) contained in the Worth Report provided Athabasca University not only with the basis for a new model, but also a powerful justification for funding once having adopted this new role. In some sense it was a question of having an institution without a mandate on the one hand (Athabasca University), and a mandate without an institution on the other (Alberta Academy), and it was just a matter of bringing the two together to achieve an attractive and defensible package. It is

interesting to note in this regard that the Worth Report explicitly suggested this possibility:

> On the other hand, if the ACCESS broadcast network and associated learning systems proposed in Section IV come into being, then the Athabasca University concept might live and grow apart from a campus in St Albert. As the Alberta Academy's host university, it could flourish in a variety of community outposts that would not require extensive capital expenditures.[70]

Another consideration might be the world-wide emergence of distance education. The impressive success of the Open University in England and its many imitators provided an increasing stream of supportive literature and findings for open university programs such as Athabasca University was attempting. Had the open university experiment failed in England and elsewhere, it is unlikely that the Progressive Conservatives could have been persuaded to attempt it again in Alberta. As things developed, however, the government and education officials became increasingly convinced that they were 'riding the wave of the future' when they backed the open university model for Athabasca University.

One of the reasons for this feeling was the relatively low cost of setting up a non-campus university. First, in absolute terms, the cost of operating the University (there are no capital costs to speak of) is ridiculously low, a mere $1,986,000 in 1976-77, for example.[71] This is less than 2% of the operating costs of the University of Alberta in the same year, or less than 1% of the total operating costs of the province's universities.[72] Second, while the per student expenditure was actually higher at Athabasca University than at other provincial universities, this could be, and was, explained away as misleading. It was pointed out that, first, as a new institution it was only natural to expect higher set up costs, but that per student expenditures could

be expected to drop as Athabasca University completed its initial course production and settled into a 'steady state'; and second, that as its students were fully employed while attending Athabasca University, they were not a drain on the Gross National Product as were those at other institutions, but instead continued to contribute to the economy and pay taxes.[73] Third, and perhaps most important, not only was Athabasca University relatively inexpensive in itself, it promised to provide a means of cutting skyrocketing education cost generally. If Athabasca University proved successful, it might well provide a viable alternative to expensive traditional universities, no matter how the demand for higher education escalated. In fact, with distance education, the greater the increases in enrolments, the greater the cost-effectiveness of the institution. If Athabasca University could provide the province with the lid for education spending, by absorbing painlessly any future enrolment increases, then two million dollars a year was indeed a small price to pay.

Another 'necessary but not sufficient' factor might have been the existence of the Interim Governing Authority previous to the election of the Progressive Conservatives in 1971. Had the university existed only as a proposal without even the physical presence of the Governing Authority, it might well have been quietly tabled and forgotten without anyone even noticing its passing. With the Authority's members to champion its cause and a formal existence personified by the President and his staff, the university was sufficiently well established to require a definite move *against* it before it could be dissolved. This the Conservatives may have been unwilling to do for two reasons.

First, universities, even fledgling ones like Athabasca, are

highly respected institutions, and to have moved decisively against it would have revealed an unsympathetic attitude towards the province's intellectual and cultural sectors, raising apprehensions of further drastic actions, and unnecessarily damaged their image. The Edmonton Journal, for example, came out very strongly against any attempt to abandon plans for Athabasca University.[74] Not to have initiated a new university might have proved acceptable politically, but to dismantle one already in the works was something else again.[75]

Second, the Progressive Conservatives had already taken on a number of powerful interests in their ill-fated attempt to introduce an Adult Education Act in 1975. The controversy surrounding this Act, and their heavy cutbacks in post-secondary spending, had generated a great deal of damaging political opposition. While the Conservatives were not prepared to undertake a new $100,000,000 capital expenditure for the original Athabasca University, neither were they willing to accept the political consequences of killing the university outright as long as there was an inexpensive alternative. Once Athabasca was allowed to continue in its new format, the government discovered that the new university supported the government on a number of issues, such as the Adult Education Act, which drew nothing but hostility from the other institutions.[76] Given the relatively low price tag for Athabasca, there seemed little point in dismantling their one ally in higher education and stirring up a whole new set of protests over the action. As suggested earlier, the Conservatives were content to "buy themselves some peace."

Furthermore, the government may have been distracted by their several reorganizations of the Department of Advanced Education. First it was established as a separate Department from Education, then they

dissolved the Universities and Colleges Commissions, and finally they reorganized the portfolio into the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower. While it would be incorrect to claim that Athabasca University got lost in the shuffle, it may be that some of its opposition had more pressing concerns for much of the time.

Similarly, if Athabasca University had few supporting vested interests, few strong political allies outside of the education elite[77], it had no definite enemies to speak of either. There was some attempt by other universities to have Athabasca University's budget allocated to them instead, but this opposition quickly dissolved as they came to realize, first, just how small these allocations were, and second, that Athabasca University might prove to be another ally against the encroachments alledgely contemplated by the government.[78] Given Athabasca University's unique mandate, there were really no competing institutions to oppose its development.[79]

On the other hand, Athabasca University's pilot project itself provided indirect support for what almost amounted to its own subsidiary industry. When the Progressive Conservatives dismantled the Human Resources Research Council, its Director and seven other officers formed a private company which was immediately awarded a three year, $600,000 contract to undertake research similar to that formerly done by the Council. Athabasca University was one of the major projects which Downey and Associates was to monitor for the company's $200,000 annual retainer. While it would obviously be silly to suggest that Athabasca University was allowed to continue so that Downey and Associates might have something to do, it is true that this arrangement created an important supporting interest.[80]

Similarly, the Progressive Conservative government presumably adopted an informal policy of rewarding party faithfuls with various types of patronage, including appointments to the Governing Authority of Athabasca University. While this increased the government's influence on the University only slightly (since it already had considerable power through financial control), it increased Athabasca University's influence on the government considerably, as it increased the number of connections between the pro-university Governing Authority and the inner Tory party circle. Thus the Cabinet itself increased the power of the vested interest supporting Athabasca University.[81]

Finally, Athabasca University's survival depended in part on the fact that its original mandate included the condition that it be innovative. First, as previously mentioned, it provided the *raison d'etre* when the rest of its mandate had become no longer valid, and second, it allowed the university to respond quickly to changing circumstances. In some sense the seeds for the open university concept had been planted very early in the University's first manifestation when the members of the Authority toured the Open University in England, and in the early emphasis on self-instructional packages in its original curriculum design. Had the University been originally intended as a traditional campus, a miniature University of Alberta (as was more the case with Lethbridge, for example), it is unlikely that the Authority would have been able to respond adequately to changed conditions, since they would not have been previously considering alternatives. Because Athabasca University had been concerned with innovative responses to contemporary society from the outset, they were better prepared to adapt to the new situation.

While all of the above factors would seem to have contributed to Athabasca University's eventual survival, none of them seems really sufficient to account for it completely. Thus, they are all 'necessary but not sufficient' factors.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER V

[1]Order-In-Council 1206/70, Alberta.

[2]The Alberta Universities Commission, First Annual Report, 1970-71 (Edmonton: The Queen's Printer, 1971.) p.

The observant reader may be disconcerted by the descrepencies between the figures for total undergraduate enrolment in Table 4-1 and those in Table 5-1. These are presumably due to slight variations between the definitions used by Statistics Canada and the Alberta Universities Commission and are not particularly significant. The important point is that they both agree on the magnitude of the growth in enrolments during this period.

[3]Robert Clark, Post-Secondary Education Until 1972: An Alberta Policy Statement (Edmonton: Queens Printer, 1970) pp. 7-8.

[4]Ibid, p. 8.

[5]T.C.Byrne, p. 86. For example, the main issue in the disturbances which led to the Red Deer Inquiry was the desire on the part of the faculty and many students to expand the university transfer program and eventually to upgrade it to full university status.

[6]Robert Clark, p. 8.

[7]Ibid., p. 6.

[8]Seastone, p. 66.

[9]Robert Clark, p. 8. (See also, Seastone, p. 27.)

[10]Ibid., p. 2.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Robert Clark, "Clark Looks At The Growth Of Universities", University Affairs

[13]The Governing Authority of Athabasca University, A.U.'s Academic Concept (Edmonton: Governing Authority, 1971) p. 7.

[14]Ibid. For example, the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin's Green Bay campus responded to A.U.'s Academic Concept with the observation that:

> Fitting Athabasca University into it [the existing university system] will be essential. In particular, the emphasis on distinctiveness or separate mission for A.U....compared to existing institutions is an important justification for a new university. You will remember that UWGB asked itself the important question, "Why would any student or professor come to Green Bay instead of going to Madison?" You might ask yourself the same question relative to the University of Alberta. (Minutes of the Governing Authority, April 6, 1971.)

[15]See Chapter IV, page the first two points.

[16]Minutes of the Regular and Special Meetings of the Governing Authority of Athabasca University (hereafter, Minutes), July 2-3, 1970.

[17]Minutes, July 24, 1970.

[18]Minutes, November 19, 1970.

[19]Minutes, October 22, 1970.

[20]A.U.'s Academic Concept

[21]Ibid., p. 5. This was in bold face in the original.

[22]Worth Report, p. 40.

[23]Academic Concept, pp. 4, 5.

[24]Ibid., p. 6. This was in bold face in the original.

[25]Ibid., p. 5. The underlined portion was in bold face in the original.

Further recognition of the human capital/manpower models can be found in the discussion at the November 19, 1970 meeting on the remarks by the President of the University of Calgary:

> You can't ignore the employability of the end product.... The university should train students to work in the community. The components of the courses offered should

> be related to what goes on in Canada and in Alberta.... In the past year the government has forced universities to become vocation oriented. This runs counter to the old tradition under which universities were developed.

[26]Academic Concept, p. 7.

[27]For example, the Worth Report stated that Athabasca University's "approaches to program operation and the career function are in tune with what the Commission foresees as one of the major waves of the future." (p. 86.)

[28]For example, the reaction of a group of University of Alberta professors who were invited to comment on A.U.'s Academic Concept was generally favourable, and criticism tended to focus on the *details* of the design rather than its underlying philosophy and models. The most general and critical comment was that its "...descriptions of traditional universities was negative, out of date and essentially an exercise in setting up a strawman." ("Report of the Academic Planning Committee Minutes, September 16, 1971.) If the distinctions between Athabasca University and traditional institutions was perceived by these academics as falling into the 'strawman' category, how radically different could Athabasca University (at this stage) have been?

[29]See, for example, Worth Report, pp. 86-87.

[30]T.C. Byrne, p. 91.

[31]Minutes, September 16, 1971.

[32]Minutes, October 21, 1971.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Minutes, November 18, 1971.

[37]Minutes, October 21, 1971.

[38]Minutes, January 20, 1972

[39]Alberta Hansard, May 30, 1972 (Volume 1, #57, pp. 4-6).

[40]AnnMarie Decore, former member of the Governing Authority of Athabasca University, in informal interview, May 1979.

[41]Minutes, September 28, 1972.

[42]Athabasca University, Athabasca University: An Experiment In Practical Planning (Edmonton: Athabasca University, 1972) p. 5.

[43]Ibid.

[44]Minutes, June 21, 1972.

[45]Minutes, October 19, 1972. The idea to develop a newspaper course locally actually originated with the Edmonton Journal who approached the Cabinet Committee On Education, which in turn contacted Athabasca University. However, it seems likely that the Cabinet Committee had been receptive to the idea at least partially due to the previous lobbying carried out by Athabasca University's President as early as May 1972. (Minutes, May 18.)

[46]Walter Worth, interview.

[47]Minutes, October 19, 1972.

[48]Ibid.

[49]"Pilot Project Proposal", Minutes, December 20, 1972.

[50]Even these were seen as more of a shift in emphasis than a major change, by President Byrne. To quote from a letter to Downey in which he is reacting to one of Downey's reports:

> You mention the change in direction. This is not quite the case. It is a change in emphasis rather than direction.... The difference in emphasis is in delivery of these learning series. We will be, nonetheless, experimenting with the tutorials service program. These services will be rendered away from what might normally be called a "campus".
>
> The student body is more limited than what was intended in the original experiment. We hoped to have a representative sample from 3 groups---the 18-24 year age group...an older group...and those who are fully employed or partially occupied at some occupation which made it impossible for them to attend university full time.
>
> We are now proposing to work entirely with the third group.

[51]L. W. Downey, The Market For Non-Traditional Forms of Advanced Education In Alberta (Edmonton: Downey Research Associates Ltd., 1974.)

[52]Minutes, October 11, 1973.

[53]The publicity campaign included a 500 line advertisement in the major Alberta dailies and 57 weeklies; 1,000 coloured posters placed in all Safeway stores north of Red Deer; 900 brochures in protestant and Catholic parishes north of Ponoka; a visual display with attendant at all major Edmonton shopping centres, 28 half-minute television spots on four separate TV stations; 30 second radio ads on city and rural staions; screenings of 15 minute colour promotional film on a number of TV stations; a number of "open line" radio interviews and appearances; and 2,000 hand-outs and 4,000 brochures.

[54]Athabasca University, Annual Report, 1975, p. 5. (Note: There were two annual reports labeled "1975"; this is the one for 1974-75.) The target had been for 1,000 registrations north of Red Deer. (Minutes, July 18, 1974.)

[55]T.C.Byrne, A Position Paper On The Athabasca University Mandate. (Edmonton: Academic Council of Athabasca University, February 1975), p. 9; Minutes, Feburary 21, 1975.

[56]Ibid, pp. 57, 60.

[57]Ibid., pp. 65-67.

[58]Advanced Education and Manpower, Athabasca University: A Proposed Role And Mandate (June 1975) (Minutes, August 21, 1975.)

[59]Letter attached to Minutes, November 20, 1975.

60 For example, Byrne told the Minister of Advanced Education that if the market for Athabasca University failed to materialize, "the Minister...would not have to shut down Athabasca University; it would close of its own accord." (Minutes, March 26, 1973.)

[61]Challenge, p. 4. Other evidence can be found in such examples as the following letter from Education Minister L.Hyndman to Dr. Byrne:

> As a new Minister I would like to know more about this organization and I need information in order to assess it.
>
> I understand that you have had an intensive and continuing involvement with the Council for many years. Accordingly, I would be grateful if I could draw on your expertise in this area. (December 7, 1971.)

Or to quote Dr. Worth:

> ...the intervention of people, of significant persons in the political process [were crucial to Athabasca's survival]. Let me identify some of these for you. Tim Byrne was one. Tim knew his way around the political arena. And wanted to, was prepared to look at alternatives that would insure survival of that institution, even though it meant substantially altering that institution forever, or for just a short period of time. (Interview.)

[62]There are a couple of interesting sidelights to this. First, the money for the Inquiry was not immediately made available due to the usual bureaucratic problems, so Byrne and the University's Secretary (who was also Byrne's assistant in the Inquiry) loaned the Inquiry money from Athabasca funds. This considerably upset the University's auditor who stated that "there would appear to be no justification or authority for initially advancing funds from Athabasca University Governing Authority for this purpose," and that "the propriety of such a payment...is questionable." There was also some question raised by the Governing Authority over the propriety of Byrne's moonlighting when he was supposed to have been a full-time employee of the University. (Minutes, September 28, 1972.)

There was, of course, no question of serious wrong-doing, and the objections were merely technical, but it does illustrate Byrne's ability to 'get the job done' in spite of various bureaucratic barriers.

Second, Byrne was sued by the Principal of Red Deer College (who had been dismissed as a result of the Inquiry) for defamation of character, since, due to *another* bureaucratic error, Byrne's appointment was alleged to have been technically incorrect, and the Inquiry therefore invalid. However, due to *yet another* technicality, this time by the plaintif the suit was incorrectly filed and therefore dismissed before it came to anything.

Again, this comedy of errors is not terribly significant, but it does illustrate the emotional intensity surrounding the Inquiry, and the personal inconvenience endured by Byrne. While it would be incorrect to suggest that the Minister of Advanced Education "owed Byrne one" for all this, it is clear that Byrne had made an impression on the Minister by his ability to cope. To quote the Challenge interview with Byrne:

> Challenge: Is it correct that you found the Minister of Advanced Education very elusive and that it was difficult to find a liaison in the Department?... Was it the Red Deer College Inquiry that gave you access to the Minister?
>
> Byrne: In a way. I had met and had some talks with Jim Foster (and convinced him that some of the Social Crediters originally on the Authority had moved from it). Slowly the suspicion of Athabasca University diminished in the minds of the government. Apparently when I was recommended to carry out the investigation...he agreed. I think it was during this negotiation that he began to

gain confidence in my judgement; certainly a rapport between us developed largely from that occasion. It was far easier to talk directly about Athabasca's future after that. (p. 92.)

[63]Ibid, p. 93:

Challenge: Why did they [the government] take to the idea of the pilot study?

Byrne: ...Government confidence...related to how much importance the Minister attached to the fact that I had presented the plan. Government was apparently betting on the individual rather than a plan.

Challenge: Not on the plan? How interesting!...

Byrne: Yes. I think it's important. If you have a reputation for being reasonably sensible, when you bring in a plan, somebody will probably say, "Well, it's worth trying." In the case of Athabasca, this was combined with the concern about conventional universities at that time....

[64]In addition to the above and to Worth's identifying Byrne as a major factor, a number of other informants asserted that Byrne's appointment was the deciding factor.

[65]Minutes, August 24, 1972.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Worth, interview.

[68]Worth Report, p. 86.

[69]Worth, interview.

[70]Worth Report, p. 87.

[71]Advanced Education and Manpower, Annual Report, 1976-77. (Edmonton: Queen's Printer, 1977.)

[72]Ibid.

[73]See Minutes, Vol. 5, Pt. 1, pp. 137-139 for an overview of course development and delivery costs; see also L.W. Downey Research Associates' Report of an Assessment, pp. 10-12 for discussion of cost effectiveness for Athabasca University's courses. This latter estimated that "oppor-

tunity costs", that is, average foregone earnings of full-time university students, to be over $5,000 per year:

> The average annual income of an unattached individual was $4800 in 1973. This figure has since risen substantially. Also, it would be considerably higher for individuals who are admissible to university. (p. 11.)

The report went on to say that even more important than Athabasca's cost/effectiveness as an operating university was the "cost/benefit of Athabasca as an experimental institution."

> In other words the benefits produced by Athabasca (both to society and to the system of Advanced Education) are in many ways unlike the benefits produced by other institutions in the system. And these benefits must weigh heavily in any cost analysis. (p. 12.)

[74] Edmonton Journal, Tuesday, November 2, 1971, p. 4.

[75] Worth interview; and Byrne: "First of all, I think it is easier to kill a research institute [in reference to the dismantling of the Human Resources Research Council] than a univeristy because research institutes don't have the same status in society." (Challenge, p. 93.)

[76] Byrne, Challenge, p. 76: "The only university that showed any degree of support for the Adult Education Act was Athabasca...."

[77] There were a few. The town of St Albert, for example, did some quiet lobbying for Athabasca University. (Minutes, December 16, 1971.)

[78] Byrne, Challenge, p. 94, and Worth interview.

[79] Athabasca University was also careful to point out to other institutions that it was not encroaching on their mission or competing for their students, even when recruiting in the same geographical location. Before Athabasca's 1974 publicity campaign, for example, the university circulated a form letter to all other post-secondary institutions which said, in part: "...while we will be advertising on a province-wide basis, I do not anticipate that we will be in competition to any marked degree with other post-secondary institutions." To this, Dr. Henry Anderson, President of Grande Prairie Regional College, replied:

> You point out that you do not anticipate that you will be "in competition" with other post-secondary institutions. I disagree. But I think there ought to be such competition, and a careful development of alternative forms of higher educational opportunity.
>
> ...we ourselves are involved in a pilot project of "self-study", but primarily at a pre-university level. Our concept is similar to yours, and may be comparable in practice in some respects as well.... Perhaps you can assist us in refining some of our approaches to our own program planning here.

Thus, rather than feeling threatened, at least some institutions looked to Athabasca for assistance and co-operative effort.

A few of the community colleges, however, felt that the existence of Athabasca University prevented them from expanding into university transfer programs. See, for example, Byrne, Challenge, p. 86.)

[80]One informant asserted that "Downey's typical *modus operandi* was to come over to the University and ask what we would like to have him say in the report. His papers were always a good reflection of current thought here at the university."

It is also interesting to note in this regard that Byrne was responsible for Downey getting his original position as head of the Human Resources Research Council (Byrne, Challenge, p. 95); and that when the Council was dismantled and replaced with Downey's private company, Downey offered Byrne a position on its "Education Board of Advisors" which Bynre accepted. (November 30, 1972, letter from Downey in Byrne's private correspondence files.) Thus, the company responsible for monitoring Athabasca University's progress had the University's President on its Advisory Board. This close working relationship between Byrne and Downey was undoubtedly to Athabasca University's advantage.

[81]This increase in influence is of course very difficult to document, and the point is more impressionistic than directly observable, but was believed to be correct by some of the informants interviewed informally at Athabasca University. See also Byrne's comment on assuring the new Progressive Conservative government that the Social Crediters on the university's Governing Authority had moved on, in footnote 62 above.

CHAPTER VI

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY MODEL

Athabasca University, under its new mandate, was to become an "open University" specializing in distance education at the post-secondary level. This new mandate was modelled largely upon the Open University of England and it is therefore necessary to examine briefly the nature and emergence of that institution.

THE OPEN UNIVERISTY IN ENGLAND

Walter Perry, first Vice-Chancellor of the Open University, has identified three trends whose convergence led to the development of the Open University concept.[1]

First, there was a growing interest in educational broadcasting. Indeed, the Open University as originally proposed by Harold Wilson in his speech of September 8, 1963, was to be a "University of the Air", an educational consortium consisting of representatives of the universities, teacher associations, publishers, the public, and the broadcasting authorities, which would arrange for educational programs to be produced and broadcast on both radio and television.[2] Ever since the early 1920s there had been a growing desire to harness the electronic media for educational purposes, and the idea of a "University of the Air" was very appealing to both educators and broadcasters alike. The BBC in particular had been very active in educational programing, and

there was considerable pressure to make the fourth television channel a full-time educational network.[3]

Second, there was a concern over the lack of educational opportunities offered to adults wishing to pursue post-secondary credit courses. While there were institutions and programs which offered adult education, these tended to stress nonvocational leisure education, such as courses in arts and crafts, languages, and physical fitness. To quote Perry:

> My general impression, as a complete newcomer to the adult educational world, was that 'examinations' and 'vocational' were almost dirty words, that somehow study towards a qualification was felt to be intrinsically less worthy than study for the sake of study. This attitude inhibited the development of vocational courses almost everywhere.[4]

Institutions offering degree or credit programs tended to be geared almost exclusively to the recent secondary-school graduate, who was expected to attend full-time.

> An adult who wished to take a degree, whether he was qualified to start the degree or not, would find it exceptionally hard to gain entrance to any university or polytechnic. This was true even if he was prepared to study full-time. Provision for mature entrants in most universities was extremely limited. There was tremendous demand from school leavers for the limited places available in the universities and most admission authorities gave preference to them. Money was better spent on training them than on training adults who could, at the end of their course, make a contribution to society only for a shorter period. The needs of adults who could not stop work to enter higher education on a full-time basis and who wished to obtain degrees by working part-time were often not met at all.[5]

In addition, the part-time adult student was presumably already productively employed and therefore in less need of further vocational education. Thus, the human capital model was thought not to apply to adult education, which was instead viewed as purely consumption and was therefore dominated by the enlightenment model. Before this lack of provision for adult learners could be accepted as a pressing social priority, it

would first have to be recognized that these adults were underemployed or in some other way represented underinvestment in human capital. There was also the complicating factor that the British University model was largely based on the concept of the cloistered environment, and the provision for part-time study seemed to many to be inherently self-defeating.

Third, there was a growing reaction against elitism in education and a demand for equality of educational opportunity. The class structure and its restrictive effects on admission to higher education were particularly apparent in England. In 1963, the very influential Robbins Commission had shown, for example, that 45% of those with fathers from the 'higher professional' class attended university, while only 4% of those whose fathers were skilled workers attained university.[6] Furthermore, in 1963 only 4.5% of the appropriate age group entered higher education in Britian, compared with 7% in France, 10% in Sweden, and 20% in the United States.[7] If twenty per cent of Americans could benefit from higher education, it followed that many students in England who desired and could benefit from post-secondary study were being denied the opportunity for economic or class reasons.

The result of this concern over inequality, and the fear that England was falling behind other nations in the provision of higher education generally, was a tremendous increase in the provision for full-time undergraduate students, through the expansion of both the size and number of universities.[8] As suggested above, however, there was relatively little thought spared for the adult learner. The problem of expanding post-secondary education fast enough to adsorb both the increasing size of the 18-24 age cohort and their increasing partici-

pation rate was difficult enough without seeking new clients from non-traditional age groups as well. Nevertheless, the higher the participation rate climbed among school leavers, the lower seemed the 1.5% participation rate of twenty years before, and the clearer it became that millions of adults had made only one mistake, that of being born too early.[9] Consequently, there was a need to provide these adults with a 'second chance' at higher education.

Thus, on the one hand there was an unmet need (the lack of provision for adults, particularly of the lower classes who had been deprived of university entrance for economic reasons when they were 18), and on the other hand there was an untried solution (the new educational technology arising out of the electronic media). It appears almost inevitable that the two should have been brought together, but the crucial factor is the political decision to make this problem and its solution a social priority.

The major factor in the Open University's successful emergence in England, therefore, was the adoption of the "University of the Air" concept by the Labour Party, and that party's election to government. A number of writers, including Perry, emphasize the role of then Prime Minister Wilson in championing the cause of the Open University, and the importance of a sympathetic government as a precondition of the Open University's establishment.[10]

Opposition to the Open University was of three types. First, the established universities were very suspicious of the Open University concept. They questioned the ability of a correspondence university to produce courses and graduates of sufficient quality to meet true university standards. Not only was there some question about the efficacy

of this new educational technology, the open admission policy seemed almost by definition to select for those students least likely to be successful. There was concern expressed that the Open University would become a dumping ground for those students the other universities rejected as unsuitable.[11] Finally, they argued that the established institutions could do whatever it was the Open University intended to do, only much better and by proven methods, if they were but given larger allocations; that is, they felt the resources being diverted to the Open University would be better spent on expanding existing institutions.[12]

The second major source of opposition came from competing priorities. Economies of scale notwithstanding, the creation of an open university required substantial investment, and in an unproven educational delivery system at that. Why should funds be allocated for this rather risky experiment in higher education for a seemingly low priority target population when projects of clearly demonstrable importance went lacking? For example, the construction of new and better primary schools in working class districts was seen by many within the government as far more important, and even as a far more effective means of reducing class inequalities and the under-representation of the lower classes in higher education in the long run, than the establishment of an Open University.[13]

The third, and perhaps most important, source of opposition was conservative ideology. Higher education in England, as elsewhere, had long been the preserve of the upper classes, serving either as a form of conspicuous consumption or as a justification of one's elite status. This position was of course modified by the provision of some university places and scholarships for working class children as an acceptable

means of sponsorship mobility, and was part of the university's function of fitting individuals into the economic structure. The provision of university education for adult members of the lower classes, however, goes against the very foundations of the class structure and the university's role in allocating economic roles, at least in the eyes of the more conservative elements of British society. If a working class person obtains his degree *before* entering the economic structure, his upward mobility could be explained by his possessing exceptional qualities for a member of the working class, and his success could be pointed to as an example of the flexibility of the class system. In other words, a certain amount of social mobility of this sort reinforces the belief that class structure represents a fair allocation of rewards based on merit. If, however, the same individual obtains his degree *after* he has already been fitted into the economy at what, through hindsight, can clearly be seen to be an inappropriately low level, then the class structure is revealed to be blatantly *unfair*. What does the corporation President say to the attendant in the executive washroom who has obtained the same degree as the President by taking courses from the Open University? How does he then rationalize the difference in their social position? At the very least, the sudden graduation of large numbers of adults who were formerly excluded from higher education would further contribute to the 'inflation' of degrees, that is, the steady erosion of the degree's ability to guarantee upward mobility.

On the other hand, while the Open University implies a major encroachment on the elite's monopoly of higher education, it does not do so at the expense of the children of the upper class. That is, the Open University provides *additional* university places as opposed to reallocating

existing places, which might have required some members of the upper class to give up their opportunities, as for example in some form of quota system. Furthermore, the elite still retains the monopoly over the prestigious universities, such as Oxford and Cambridge, so that what degrees one has becomes less important than from which universities they were granted.[14]

The opposition from the other universities was easiest to overcome. Part of the opposition was removed when it was made clear that the Open University would not compete with the established universities. Admission to the Open University was restricted to those over twenty-one years old so as to reduce the risk of it becoming "everybody's second choice" after being rejected by more prestigious universities.[15] Opposition was further reduced when the common misconception that the Open University would be totally dependent on broadcast materials was dispelled. In spite of the original "University of the Air" name, only five per cent of its teaching program consisted of television broadcasts, a fact which helped very much to reassure skeptics who had complained that it was impossible to obtain a degree "just by watching the tell".[16] Nevertheless, the other higher education institutes continued to regard the Open University with suspicion until after it had actually begun operation and proved to be both successful and no threat to the established universities.

The second source of opposition, that of competing priorities, was overcome by the direct intervention of the Prime Minister and Jennie Lee, the responsible Minister. Having established the "University of the Air" as a priority, largely on the basis of personal conviction, they simply overruled any opinions to the contrary.[17]

The third source of opposition, conservative ideology, was overcome

by the Open University's success. Once the Open University was in operation and obviously filling a need there could be no question of dismantling it, especially since the rest of the world was rushing to copy its example. During the Open University's actual creation, the conservative opposition was of course still in force, but unable to effectively block the university's development simply because the Labour government (with its supportive ideology) had the upper hand in Parliament long enough to achieve the necessary momentum.[18]

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the Open University could only have emerged under a Labour government. While the advances in educational broadcasting and the perceived gap in the provision of higher education for adults were undoubtedly important contributing trends to the eventual emergence of a "University of the Air", they would not have been sufficient in themselves. A Conservative government faced with these two trends would probably have argued that no matter how promising educational television or how unfortunate the lack of provision for adult education, the competing priorities were more important and of more proven worth than an Open University. A Conservative government would have been sympathetic to the tradtional (elitist) universities' claim that they could produce better results than the Open University if its intended resources were allotted to them. The Conservative Party would have agreed with opposition questioning the Open University's standards, and would have viewed the suggestion of an open admissions policy as patently absurd. Whether these arguments are perceived as valid (they appear reasonable enough unless one has the benefit of hindsight) or merely as a rationalization of a decision based on the deeper conservative ideological opposition (that is, the preservation of the elite's monopoly

on higher education), the Conservative Party would have encountered little difficulty in squashing the Open University concept in its initial stages had they retained control of the government.[19]

Thus, the two most important factors in the emergence of the Open University in England were, first, the emergence of an ideological position supportive of working class adults obtaining higher education through an open admissions policy, and second, a political context in which this ideological position could triumph, that is, the election of a Labour government.

What exactly, then, was the Open University model which finally emerged in England, and what part of that model has been adopted by Athabasca University?

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY MODEL

First and foremost, the Open University was a 'second chance' for those adults who, for whatever reason, had failed to obtain a university education upon leaving school, but who wished to pursue higher education now.[20] This primary goal is indicated by the name "Open University". The University's "openness" resides in its admission policy, which does not require any formal qualifications other than that the student be over twenty-one years of age, and in its "distance education" approach which allows the student to complete his studies part-time and in his own home. Thus removing the two most difficult barriers to admission at other British Universities, those of insufficient "A Levels" and the necessity of sacrificing employment for full-time studies, adults are provided with a true opportunity to achieve university education.

The second major element of the Open University model is that it

is a correspondence university. (While this was mentioned above as part of the university's "openness", it should be obvious that a university could be involved with correspondence without being "open", so this is also a separate issue.) The Open University produces courses which rely primarily upon printed correspondence material, supplemented by radio and television broadcasts, short summer school sessions, and the occassional tutorial. The Open University pioneered "distance education" at the university level and is responsible for much of the educational technology available in this field.

A number of secondary elements follow naturally from this correspondence aspect of the Open University model. First, the university is without a student campus. The University consists of a set of offices, a printing plant, and a computer centre. There are no classrooms, no student residences, and only a small library. Second, this in turn means that the University is not restricted to a local campus but may serve the entire nation with equal ease. Third, this in turn allows for economies of scale; course materials and graduates may be mass produced. Fourth, the producation of correspondence courses requires a new division of labour among the staff. Course teams consisting of academics, illustrators, editors, television producers, and so on had to be developed to cope with the complex task of course production. Finally, the university cannot provide extracurricular activities, nor can it provide any of the normal (though latent function) resocialization of students through participation in fraternities, and so on, that takes place on other campuses.[21]

The third major aspect of the Open University model, though one which is not always recognized, was Perry's insistence that the courses

be relevant to the University's non-scholarly students. The object of the Open University was, in Perry's view, to educate each student to the fullest extent of his potential, not to produce scholars per se. Perry felt that other universities, in their desire to produce scholars in their own image, sometimes ignored the real needs of the vast majority of students who were not destined for a life in academia.[22] Perry felt that there would be little point in providing adults, particularly working class adults, a 'second chance' at university if the goals of this higher education were incompatible with either their needs or desires.[23] This need to adjust the goals of higher education for the Open University model reflects the shift from elite to mass higher education, and the corresponding shift from the enlightenment model to the human capital model, While making education more 'relevant' was not a theme restricted to the Open University, it does appear to have been an essential part of the model as it emerged in England.

Beyond these differences, the Open University adopted a number of innovations in its operation which were less central to the model itself. These included a credit system for courses similar to that common throughout North America, a heavy dependence on computer assisted admistration, a claendar year term schedule, and an interdisciplinary approach to curriculum design.

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY MODEL AND ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

Even in its first manifestation, Athabasca University shared some of the model's features. Like most North American universities, it used a course credit system to determine progress towards a degree, and it was to rely heavily on a computer for administration. Unlike most

universities, it was to have year round operation, an innovation similar in some respects to the Open University's adoption of the calendar year schedule. In addition, the original Athabasca University model had stressed "learning over teaching" and had therefore proposed that curriculum be organized into multimedia self-instructional packages not unlike the correspondence packages of the Open University. The curriculum was also to be organized around interdisciplinary themes or problems. Furthermore, the mandate to innovate had within it the implied desire to produce curriculum which would be 'relevant' to the seventies, a search common to most North American universities following the student unrest of the sixties, but perhaps slightly more successful at Athabasca. While mot phrased quite so forcefully or clearly as Perry's criticism of higher education's emphasis on the production of scholars, there was a real concern in the original academic concept that Athabasca University's "liberal education" also be vocational and of use to the non-scholar.[24]

Once Athabasca University became an open university, it of course adopted much more of the Open University model. Athabasca University became a correspondence university specializing in the production of printed correspondence materials supplemented by radio and cable television broadcasts and the occasional telephone tutorial. It became an open university in that it has no entrance requirements other than that the student be over eighteen, and in that it caters to adult part-time students working in their own homes (thus removing the barriers to access discussed above). Like the Open University, it has no student campus and can offer no fraternity style resocialization. And, like the Open University, the production of correspondence materials had required a new division of labour and administrative structure within the university.

Here, however, the similarities end. Unlike the Open University, Athabasca University is a provincial, rather than national, institution. It therefore cannot achieve the economies of scale available to the Open University in England. Furthermore, since all teachers in Alberta are university graduates, it lacks the potential market of non-degree teachers who make up a very significant portion of the Open University's student population. Athabasca University is therefore inherently less economically viable than the Open University in England.

Second, Athabasca University is far less visible to the general public than is the Open University because it does not use open air broadcast. This was largely a question of economics and timing, since cable channels became available for educational use just as Athabasca University was being established, but it does have the latent dysfunction that non-students do not tend to hear about or watch Athabasca's programming.[25]

Third, Athabasca University does not generally make use of residential summer schools and so has even less contact with some of its students than the Open University. On the other hand, Athabasca University has a number of instructor delivered courses available through other (mostly community college) campuses which would seem to make it almost a traditional institution part of the time.

Fourth, Athabasca University's new mandate adds a number of items to the Open University model. One of Athabsca University's major roles, for example, is credit co-ordination; that is, students obtain a transcript (or a Bachelor of General Studies degree if they have sufficient accumulated credits) from Athabasca University for work completed at other higher education institutions, including technical schools and

community colleges, to facilitate transferability of credit. There is also a greater emphasis on Athabasca University's ability to reach students isolated by distance from normal educational channels, such as those in the Northwest Territories, than is the case at the Open University in England.

Finally, the most significant difference between Athabasca University and the Open University in England is that there is relatively little attention paid to Athabasca's being a "second chance" for students excludedfrom higher education because of their social class background. Whereas "the major objective of the OU is to offer opportunities to educationally underprivileged groups" or "to mitigate social inequality", this was never mentioned as part of Athabasca University's mandate.[26]

This represents a fundamental change in the model. The Open University model in England had been premised on the clear recognition of the disabling consequences of the class structure, and its other features (its openness, its correspondence aspect, and its relevance to the non-scholar) represented an attempt to construct an educational institution which could provide this "second chance". In Alberta, on the other hand, Athabasca University adopted much of the educational technology of the open university model without adopting the model's original rationale.

The question then becomes, how did the model come to be adopted without its fundamental rationale (the true essence of the model) and what ideological forces were substituted as the driving force behind the model as it currently exists in Athabasca University?

THE EMERGENCE OF ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY AS AN OPEN UNIVERSITY

Earlier in this thesis it was suggested that Athabasca University became an open university largely through historical accident. Having lost its original mandate and target population, it turned to the open university model for a new mandate and a new clientele. It is important to note, however, that this was not the only viable alternative avialable to the university. As is clear from the Minister's announcement of May 30, 1972, the Progressive Conservative government was prepared to support Athabasca University for at least five years as a pilot project in traditional innovation, that is, as a 'college in miniature' experimenting in curriculum design. Yet six months later the university had undergone a 'shift in emphasis' to become Canada's first open University. Why?

There are a number of reasons why this would appear to have been an unlikely development. First, not all of Perry's preconditions for the emergence of the Open University concept in England were met in Alberta at the time Athabasca University was moving in this direction. Opportunities for part-time adult students to obtain higher education had never been better, and what few perceived gaps there were in these provisions were being systematically plugged through such mechanisms as the creation of Further Education Councils, and so on. Educational broadcasting was still on the rise in Alberta, but efforts in this field were focused on ACCESS and its political battles. The concern over elitism in education which Perry lists as his third precondition was almost totally absent from the Alberta scene. Far from being the focus of social reform and election battles, the issue of lower class participation in higher

education was of concern only to a minority of academics. Similarly, the last precondition in England, that of a Labour government, was also unmet in Canada. Instead of a strong and active Labour party, the province had a Progressive Conservative government which was even further to the 'right' than its Social Credit predecessors. In fact, the New Democratic Party (Canada's equivalent of the Labour Party) had only one member in the legislature, so that success of the open university model in Alberta can in no way be attributed to the activities of the political left.

Second, all three sources of opposition to the Open University in England *were* also active in Alberta. The established universities argued that resources allocated to Athabasca University would be better spent on them. The Conservative government believed that education spending as a whole had risen far too quickly, and so was very open to the claims of competing priorities, especially that of industrial diversification. Finally, conservative ideology, with all its implications for opposition to the open university concept, was in full force in Alberta during this period.

When one considers the struggle over the establishment of the Open University in England where all the conditions were just right, it is rather strange to realize with what quiet ease Athabasca University was able to adopt this foreign model, especially since this was accomplished only two years after the Open University had itself begun operations. How was this possible?

The answer is simply that the open university model as adopted in Alberta was fundamentally different from that adopted in England. The ideological opposition to the open university model had been bypassed

because the ideological component of the model (its emphasis on providing a 'second chance') had been removed, leaving only its relatively innocuous innovations in educational technology. The remaining preconditions and sources of opposition were rendered irrelevant by the ideological positions and political interests of the education elite and/or the Progressive Conservative government.

There are two possible explanations why the 'second chance' component of the Open University model was seen as inappropriate to Alberta: Either social class is not a significant factor in educational attainment in Alberta, or this class structure is sufficiently submerged that it does not *appear* to be a significant factor. The evidence presented in Chapter II (pages 33-35), however, indicates that social class *is* a significant factor in the attainment of higher education in Canada, and there is no reason to assume that Alberta is an exception.[27] Nevertheless, social class is almost never mentioned as a factor in educational attainment in Alberta.

Equality of educational opportunity is not discussed as such in the Worth Report[28] so it is necessary to turn to a report published by the Alberta Human Resources Research Council entitled A Review of Educational Opportunity In Alberta, 1970 for a statement of the education elite's approach to the subject during this period.[29]

This amazing booklet manages to discuss the whole issue of equality of educational opportunity without a single table or statistic to indicate the social economic backgrounds of students. The relevance of social class to educational attainment is only acknowledged *once* in the entire booklet:

> Limited economic resources frequently constitute an external barrier to educational accomplishment. Another external constraint faced by a large number of Alberta youth is the geographic distance separating them from the institutions which could provide the means to educational advancement. Socio-cultural factors frequently serve as constraints to educational achievement. Educational opportunities are limited by artificial barriers such as discrimination and social or economic disparity.[30]

Even more amazing than the brevity of the attention given to social class factors, is that the review explicitly *rejects* the standard models of equality of educational opportunity and their implied acknowledgement of social class (or cultural minorities):

> It is widely believed that in order to extend educational opportunity, we must increase educational "inputs" in the form of facilities, staff, curriculum, finances, etc. This belief is based on the tacit assumption that "more" equals "better". From this assumption it follows that if we provide the same *quantity* of services and facilities (i.e., "inputs") to various sub-groups of the population, we are then providing equal educational opportunities.
>
> An assessment technique which is presently in vogue takes the position that we must examine the "outputs" as well as the "inputs" of the educational system in order to improve our evaluations of opportunity. Proponents of this concept believe that equal educational opportunities are reflected by equal outputs in the form of student achievement as indicated by marks on standardized achievement tests, the degree of social and economic mobility of graduating students, the proportion of students who enrol in insitutions of higher learning, etc....
>
> Both concepts of opportunity discussed above are based on the assumption that: (a) there is a standard set of educational goals established by the society which reflect the values of the majority, and (b) the role of our educational institutions is to move all people toward the achievement of these standard goals.... Such assumptions however, are increasingly being challenged....
>
> Since the wants and needs of individuals differ, equal and standard educational inputs do not assure equal opportunities for all people. Moreover, equal and standard educational outputs cannot be considered

indicative of equal educational opportunities.[31]

In their stead, the report advances a "phenomenological" [sic] model of opportunity "which views opportunity as a function of the hopes, desires, and aspirations of the individual."[32]

The implication of the adoption of the phenomenological model of opportunity in Alberta is-that it tends to 'psychologise' social class factors. The individual's failure to attain higher education may be explained on the basis of *his* "hopes, desires, and aspirations" (or lack thereof) rather than be attributed to any peculiarities of the social structure, specifically its structure of inequality. If the lower class is under-represented in higher education it is (according to this view) because the lower class student does now *want* to attend university. Higher education is not seen as 'relevant' to the needs, desires, and aspirations of the lower class individual. The phenomenological model can also be seen as a continuation of earlier 'social darwinist' models which explained the lower class (or minority group) student's failure on the basis of the individual's "inability to defer gratification", his low "need for achievement", and other psychological failings.

The rest of the Review is devoted to extolling the expansion of higher education in Alberta throughout the 1960s and, by extension, the expansion of educational opportunity. It is clearly implied that educational opportunity had never been better in Alberta, and that continued expansion of the system was to be both desired and anticipated. The 'onward and upward' approach of both the human capital model and the progressive ideology of the education elite is clearly evident throughout the Review.

This view was partially, if somewhat superficially, supported by the fact that except for a few restricted faculties (such as Law, Business Administration, and Medicine) no student with the requisite educational qualifications who wished to attend university was turned away. Since it thus appeared that any student who wanted to attend did, there seemed little reason to provide alternative routes to higher education. The situation was markedly different in England where universities are still unable to accommodate all those who apply, and where until very recently the traditional campuses were clearly the preserve of the elite. Thus, while the Open University's emphasis on providing a "second chance" was central to the open university model in England, it was deemed unnecessary and inappropriate for Alberta. The education elite, when importing the technical innovations of the open university model, simply ignored its ideological component.

This tended to eliminate the potential opposition to the model from conservative ideology. While the election of a Labour government was an absolutely vital precondition to the successful emergence of the Open University in England, this was not important to the model's adoption in Alberta, because the version of the model adopted by Athabasca University was devoid of ideological content (or rather, had an ideological content more compatible with the Alberta scene, as will be discussed later in the chapter). By emphasizing the model's correspondence aspects and downplaying its original rationale of social reform, the education elite had fundamentally changed the model such that there was literally nothing left for the conservative ideology of the Progressive Conservatives to react against.

Similarly, it was not necessary for there to be a growing concern

over elitism in education and a wisespread demand for social reform in Alberta (as was the case in England) because the social reform component of the model was missing.

Thus having accounted for the removal of the ideological preconditions and opposition to the adoption of the model, there still remain three other factors identified by Perry as important to the Open University's emergence in England which must also be accounted for.

First, while there were few perceived gaps in the provision of higher education for adults in Alberta, in contrast to the very great need apparent in the United Kingdom, this was not a necessary precondition for the search for innovative solutions for the provision of further education in this province. As suggested earlier, the progressive ideology of the education elite predisposed them to an acceptance of innovation and a desire to experiment with new educational technologies. Whereas the tradition-ridden higher education establishment in England required a clearly demonstrable need to initiate change, this was not the case here. Ideology, rather than necessity, is the mother of invention in Alberta. In the case of Athabasca University, the search for, and experimentation with, educational innovation was an explicit component of its mandate.

Second, the need for the emergence of educational broadcasting as a precondition to the emergence of the open university concept did not apply in Alberta. Quite aside from the fact that educational broadcasting *was* being developed in Alberta (albeit along slightly different lines), the fact that the open university concept had already emerged elsewhere meant that it was not necessary to repeat that evolution again here. Trends in educational broadcasting were important to the emergence

of the Open University in England because it was the first open university, but subsequent institutions could adopt the model without having to develop the concept from scratch themselves. The only precondition in terms of educational broadcasting, then, is that the necessary broadcast facilities are available locally (and with the advent of relatively inexpensive videorecorders, even this requirement might be bypassed.)

Third, the opposition from the established institutions disappeared once it became apparent that this new university would not be competing for either their students or significant allocations. If anything, the adoption of the open university model by Athabasca University was in the other institutions' best interests, since it removed the threat of competition by the fourth university without actually having to dismantle it.

The above discussion should help explain how it was possible for Athabasca University to adopt the open university model in spite of the fact that conditions in Alberta did not appear to meet the preconditions identified by Perry as necessary for this development in England. Yet this is not in itself a sufficient explanation for the emergence of an open university in Alberta, since such a development requires not merely the absence of obstacles, but also some positive motive force. In other words, if the desire for social reform was *not* the driving force behind the adoption of the open university model here (as was the case in England), then what was?

Part of the answer has already been suggested. The adoption of the open university model appeared to be the most practical way of ensuring Athabasca University's survival. Since it had been discovered that there were no students of the conventional type for the university to serve in the early seventies, the university (largely in the person of its

President) searched for a new clientele. The situation is analogous to that of a private corporation which seeks a new product because the current one has failed to prove competitive in the marketplace. Had there not already been a fledgling university struggling for survial, it is unlikely that the open university model would have been implented in Alberta, or at least not as early as it was.

Furthermore, there was great interest in Athabasca's innovative approach to higher education, both in the original model and later as an open university pilot project. The education elite simply 'believed in' innovation, and therefore in the Athabasca University experiment. Similarly, the establishment of a pilot project and Athabasca's continuation as an 'R&D' institute in higher education was entirely acceptable to the Progressive Conservative government's corporate management approach.

However, the real driving force behind the adoption of the open university model in Alberta was the Progressive Conservative government's desire to 'put a lid' on education spending. While Athabasca University could never hope to match the economies of scale achieved by the Open University in England, it does provide a relatively cheap alternative to continued expansion of the university system in the province.

Athabasca University is effective in reducing costs at two levels. First, it had the manifest ability to absorb any increase in enrolments above the provincial university sytem's current enrolment ceilings. No matter how much or how fast enrolments were suddenly to rise, Athabasca University could absorb the increase with relative ease and at an increasingly reduced cost. Furthermore, Athabasca University could absorb these increases no matter where in the province they were to

occur, thus avoiding the necessity of expanding regional facilities. To quote its first President, Athabasca University could:

> Decrease enrolment pressures on conventional universities by providing an alternative route to a university degree through conveniently located resource centres in public libraries (or elsewhere) within the province's major cities....
>
> As you know, the model which we have been developing stresses the university campus, not as a geographic entity, but as a communication network. This makes possible a reasonably rapid expansion of high quality yet economically reasible university services to residents outside the province's major centres.[33]

Here it is not so much a question of absorbing the excess as it is of drawing off the demand. One can imagine, for example, a potential University of Alberta student deciding instead to take employment in Fort McMurray and to work on his degree during his leisure hours. For the student it would mean lucrative employment and something to do in what otherwise might be boring time off in an isolated community, and an eventual degree (or transferable credits for delayed attendance at the University of Alberta). He would be in the enviable position of being able to have his cake and eat it too. For the government, it would mean one less student demanding entry to the University of Alberta, and one more worker contentedly contributing to the province's economy.

At a somewhat subtler level, however, it may also have the latent function of 'cooling out' students' demand for higher education. Taking a course by correspondence is even more difficult than completing one on campus,[34] and those students for whom higher education would be deemed unsuitable under the manpower model may cease to aspire to a university degree after struggling with one or two courses from Athabasca University over a period of twelve to thirty-six months. Not only do correspondence courses require more self-discipline (since they are competing with full-

time employment and the normal demands of a "non-student's" life), but the inordinate number of years it requires to complete a degree must seem to make the attainment of a baccalaureate recede impossibly into the future.

Similarly, the oft claimed convenience of Athabsca University courses for women with small children may be seen either as a manifest expansion of opportunity for women to attain higher education, or as a latent means of 'cooling out' the demand for daycare for female university students.

Furthermore, Athabasca University's mere existence could be used to 'cool out' the demand for more university places by the simple expedient of telling students turned away from the conventional universities that if they were *really* serious about attaining higher education, they would take advantage of the opportunity afforded them by Athabasca University.

Beyond the individual level, Athabasca University could also 'cool out' the demand for the construction of more local post-secondary institutions. As is clear from both the Red Deer College Inquiry and the some twenty-eight applications for Athabasca's permanent site, many of the province's larger (and even some of the smaller) communities might attempt to exert considerable pressure on the government for local campuses. Existing community colleges, especially those offering university transfer courses, would be continually lobbying to be upgraded to full university status. The alternative provided by Athabasca University, however, forestalls such demands by delivering university courses to the local community college, meeting the demands of the students in smaller urban centres without the need for expensive facilities.

Thus, Athabasca University not only provides a cost effective

alternative route to higher education, it helps put a 'lid' on higher education spending. This in turn makes it very attractive to the Progressive Conservative government which does not feel that it can allocate any additional resources for the further expansion of the university system.

In summary, then, the radical social reform basis of the open university model was replaced in Alberta by a conservative economic motive. The model was adopted by Athabasca University in response to the education elite's desire to maintain Athabasca University and its belief in the (modified) model, and in response to the government's desire to contain rising educational costs.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1]Walter Perry, Open University: A Personal Account By The First Vice-Chancellor. (London: The Open University Press, 1976) pp. 1-8.

[2]Ibid., pp. 8-9.

[3]Ibid., pp. 5-7.

[4]Ibid., p. 2.

[5]Ibid., p. 3.

[6]Ibid., p. 8.

[7]John Ferguson, The Open University From Within. (London: University of London Press, 1975) p. 12.

[8]Walter Perry, p. 4.

[9]Brian MacArthur, "An Interim History Of The Open University" in The Open University Opens, ed. Jeremy Tunstall (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974.) p. 10.

[10]Ibid., pp. 4-7; Walter Perry, pp. 8-9. 10-30; Ferguson, pp. 13-14, 25-26; and Naomi E. MacIntosh, A Degree of Difference (Surrey: Society for Research Into Higher Education, 1976) pp. 2-6.

[11]Ferguson, pp. 27-28.

[12]Walter Perry, p. 5.

[13]MacArthur, pp. 15-16, and Walter Perry, p.10.

[14]See, for example, Chapter II, pp. 32, 42-44.

[15]Ferguson, pp. 27-28

[16]Walter Perry, p. 33.

[17]It is interesting to note in this regard that not only did the idea of the "University of the Air" originate with Prime Minister Wilson, but Jennie Lee was herself a self-educated graduate of the London School of Economics External Examination program.

[18]MacArthur, p. 16; and Perry, p. 30.

[19]MacArthur, p. 17.

[20]Geoffrey Crowther [first Chancellor of the Open University], quoted by Ferguson, pp. 19-20, and the Report of the Planning Committee for the Open University to the Secretary of State for Education and Science, quoted by McIntosh, pp. 5-6.

[21]See, for example, Tunstall, pp. vii-xvii.

[22]Perry, pp. 53-55.

[23]The difficulty here, of course, is determining what is 'relevant'. Who determines what is appropriate for the lower class to learn? There is always the danger that making courses 'relevant' is merely another means of excluding these students from 'true' higher education. However, it may be appropriate to be charitable and assume that his concern was with making the university's courses more liberating rather than less.

[24]Academic Concept, pp. 4-5.

[25]The same applies to Athabasca University's radio broadcasts, though for a slightly different reason. Unlike their British counterparts who are used to serious radio programing, North American listeners tend to assume radio is only good for music and brief newscasts; that is, commercial radio has not always emphasized educational programing.

[26]Quoted by Willem van der Eyken, "The Seeds of Radical Change", in The Open University Opens, ed. Jeremy Tunstall (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974) p. 29.

[27]There are no statistics on students' social-economic status available on Alberta. The education elite's 'blind spot' on social class has meant that this data is simply not collected.

[28]There is one page on the "Children Of The Poor" (p. 81) and another on "The Disadvantaged" which includes "Native Peoples" (p. 160) and a quarter page on "The Poor" (p. 162) but these deal with primary and secondary education.

[29]E. J. Ingram and L. W. West, A Review Of Educational Opportunity In Alberta, 1970. (Edmonton: The Human Resources Research Council, 1971.) It cannot be claimed that this document represents a consensus of the views of the educational elite in the same way as was the Worth Report Nevertheless, the fact that it was published by the semi-official Human Resources Research Council, and the fact that it is the only major statement of educational opportunity approaches in Alberta during this period may lend it a certain credibility as a viewpoint acceptable to the Alberta education elite in the early seventies.

[30]Ibid., p. 8.

[31]Ibid., pp. 2, 7. Emphasis in the original.

[32]Ibid., p. 7.

[33]T. C. Byrne, in a letter to the Minister of Advanced Education, November 18, 1974.

[34]See footnote 27, Chapter VII for a possible qualification of this "conventional wisdom" that a correspondence degree is more difficult to obtain than one from a conventional university.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter returns to a consideration of the questions raised in Chapter I. The first section deals with the emergence of the 'open university' concept in Alberta. The second section deals with the implications of this development for the human capital model. The third section examines briefly the implications of the open university concept for the equality of educational opportunity. Finally, the fourth section discusses the suitability of Zald's political economy model for studies of this nature.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY CONCEPT IN ALBERTA

At first glance, the emergence of an open university in Alberta during the past decade may appear to be something of an anomaly. In fact, the original impetus for this thesis was that it struck the author as incongruous that a radical institution such as the British Open University could be transplanted to Alberta during the very period that the Conservative government was de-emphasizing higher education relative to other social (particularly economic) priorities. How was it that a government committed to 'putting a lid' on education spending—and which was introducing budetary cutbacks at the established universities—was nevertheless prepared to fund the creation of yet *another* university? Furthermore, the open university concept seemed incompatible with Progressive Conservative ideology, or even, perhaps, the perceptions of the

average Albertan. Whereas the British Open University had been premised on a clear recognition of the disabling effects of the class structure on the attainment of higher education in England, most Albertans are not prepared to acknowledge even the *existence* of a class structure in Alberta, let alone the possibility that anyone has been denied access to higher education as a consequence of the social structure.[1] Why then was a Conservative government willing to fund an institution designed to solve a problem which no one believed existed in Alberta?

Of course a partial explanation for both these apparent paradoxes may be found in the fact that Athabasca University in its *original* manifestation was neither a creation of the cost conscious Progressive Conservatives nor an 'open university'. The fourth university was originally established by the Social Credit government as an undergraduate college.

The Social Credit government initiated planning on Athabasca University in response to rapidly increasing enrolments, both actual and projected, at the province's three existing universities. The education elite in Alberta was convinced that enrolments would continue to climb and that there was an urgent need to begin work on a fourth campus immediately, in order to be able to meet the anticipated demand for university places by the mid-seventies. The Social Credit government accepted the predictions of its education experts and believed that it had a responsibility to accommodate this growing demand for higher education. Ideologically, the Social Credit government, true to its populist roots, believed that its first priority was to provide for the legitimate needs of its people, and it accepted the human capital model's view that investment in higher education was a necessary precondition

for the social and economic development of the province. The government therefore established an Interim Governing Authority for Athabasca Universtiy in June 1970. By the time the Progressive Conservatives had taken office a year later, this Interim Governing Authority had already developed a comprehensive academic model and appointed a President. While far from being operational, Athabasca University had progressed sufficiently beyond the initial planning stages under the Social Credit that the new Progressive Conservative government was loath to attempt to kill it outright. Thus the paradox of a Progressive Conservative government funding a new university while attempting to restrain spending on other campuses is partially explained by the fact that it had inherited the project from the previous administration.

Similarly, the original academic model for Athabasca University was completely consistent with previous education practice in Alberta. As an exercise in 'traditional innovation', it represented the culmination of the then current trends and concerns in higher education.

The original mandate for Athabasca University called for the creation of an undergraduate institution restricted to Arts, Science, and Education. This reflected the demographic pressures in those faculties and the Social Credit administration's desire to respond positively. The restriction to specific faculties and the prohibition against the development of graduate studies, however, is also an excellent example of the provincial encroachment on university autonomy, which was a major trend in Canada from the mid-sixties on. The issue of administrative reform manifested itself in Athabasca University's unicameral Governing Authority and in the adoption of the 'module' as its basic administrative unit. Concern over student unrest and alienation resulted in curriculum

reform and student representation on the Interim Governing Authority (even before there *were* any students). The debate over the role of the university in modern society found expression in the academic concept in its redefinition of 'liberal education'. Athabasca University's mandate to innovate reflected not only the general trend towards modernizing higher education, but also the progressive ideology of Alberta's education elite. Specific structures and curriculum designs spelled out in the original academic model foreshadowed very closely the formulations of the Worth Report, thus clearly indicating that this first model represented the current thinking of the education elite. Far from being a foreign institution imported from abroad without reference to the education or ideological context of Alberta, the original Athabasca University was totally a product of local developments. Consequently, there was nothing in its original academic model to which either the Social Credit or Progressive Conservative governments were likely to object.

Thus, the apparant anomaly of an open university being established in Alberta is partially explained by the fact that it did not start out *as* an open university. Taken with the fact that work on the fourth university was initiated by the Social Credit government rather than the Progressive Conservatives, it should be obvious that the creation of Athabasca University in its original form was a natural, almost routine, development.

However, having accounted for its initial establishment does not explain why it was able to survive as an institution or why it was later permitted to change to an open university format. The real question here is not, "How did Athabasca University come into existence?", but

rather, "How did Athabasca University manage to survive the loss of its original mandate, and how did it continue to survive as an open university?"

As will be recalled from Chapter V, university enrolments in Alberta began to fall short of anticipated levels just as the new Progressive Conservative government was reviewing all capital projects. Without the pressure of escalating enrolments, the need for a new $100,000,000 university was no longer apparent. Logically, the Progressive Conservatives should have cancelled plans for a fourth university altogether. Yet Athabasca University survived.

Part of the reason was that universities, even fledgling ones like Athabasca, are prestigious institutions. It would have been politically unsound, or at least troublesome, for the Progressive Conservatives to have killed it outright. Furthermore, there was always the possibility that the enrolment slowdowns were a temporary phenomenon, and the government did not wish to be caught off guard by a renewed upsurge in university attendance. Consequently, they simply suspended planning on the physical plant (that is, rejected any immediate capital expenditures) and postponed their decision on Athabasca's ultimate future indefinitely by converting it from a university to a 'pilot project in higher education'.

The real key to Athabasca University's survival, however, was the role played by the education elite.

First, the education elite as a whole 'believed in' universities. Virtually unanimous in their adherence to the human capital model, they were convinced that any investment in higher education would be repaid in economic and social development. They therefore did not like to

contemplate the closure of *any* university, and added to the pressure on the government to keep Athabasca University alive. Even the most confident party must balk at overruling the unanimous opinion of its education experts, especially during its first few months in office.

Second, while acknowledging that the need for a fourth campus was not as urgent as they had previously thought, most educators still maintained that Athabasca University would be needed eventually. The Worth Report, for example, argued for a 1975-76 opening for the first 650 student modules.[2] The Progressive Conservatives could not simply ignore predictions of its experts, but had to allow for the possibility of another round of enrolment increases.

Third, while the concept of a pilot project was completely compatible with the Progressive Conservative's corporate approach to administration, the government was clearly deferring to the education elite's orientation towards innovation when it agreed to finance the project. In other words, even though Athabasca University had lost all of its original mandate except for its innovative function, this was deemed sufficient to justify its continued existence.

Fourth, the education elite was very supportive of Athabasca University's academic model. To quote the Worth Report again, "...the underlying concept of this institution must not be lost. Its application is an essential ingredient in the transformation of higher education in this province."[3] This support was undoutedly a factor in the government's decision that Athabasca's academic concept was sufficiently promising to pursue further, through the establishment of the pilot project.

Fifth, the education elite's openness to innovation meant that, first, they were inclined to keep abreast of the latest developments in

higher education, including the establishment of the Open University in England; and that, second, they were eager to borrow and adapt any idea which looked promising. Thus, a rough facsimile of the open university model can be found in the Worth Report as the 'Alberta Academy'. The knowledge and acceptance of this model by a significant number of the education elite was an obvious precondition to its adoption by Athabasca University.

Sixth and last, the education elite grafted the open university model onto Athabasca University. Having lost its original mandate, Athabasca University sought a new one in the open university model. Since its original target population—recently matriculated full-time students—had failed to materialize, it sought a new clientele in part-time adult students. Since it was not to be allocated capital funds for a new campus, it sought to make virtue out of its adversity and stressed home-based learning. Of course, 'Athabasca University' in this context actually refers to members of the education elite, particularly the university's President. Outside the university itself, other members of the education elite (including key officials of the Department of Advanced Education) also supported Athabasca's adopting an open university format. As suggested in Chapter V, it was largely a case of having a mandate without an institution (the Alberta Academy) on the one hand, and an institution without a mandate (Athabasca) on the other. To the education elite, it was only natural that the two should be consolidated, and this was suggested in the Worth Report.

In summary then, Athabasca University survived the loss of its original mandate because (a) the Progressive Conservatives were reluctant to dismantle it completely if a more politically acceptable solution

could be found, (b) the education elite was very supportive of the university, and (c) it was able to substitute a new mandate for the one Athabasca had lost.

This, however, still leaves the question of how the open university model came to be seen as suitable for use in Alberta. As will be recalled from Chapter VI, the Open University in England could only have emerged under a Labour government and in response to a growing recognition that a significant proportion of the popuation had been denied access to higher education because of their social class. The ideological and political atmosphere in Alberta was quite the opposite. No one in Alberta believed that social class was a significant barrier to access to higher education, and the Progressive Conservatives had just won a landslide election victory. How could an open university have flourished under these conditions?

The answer, of course, is that the 'open university' model adopted in Alberta was *not* the same as the open university model which emerged in England. The terminology, technology, and structure of the two institutions were roughly the same, but the model's ideological component was fundamentally altered.

Whereas the Open University in England was premised upon the need to provide compensatory opportunities for higher education to working and middle class adults who had formerly been denied access to university, this was not seen as necessary for Alberta. The 'second chance' aspect of the model was downplayed and subtly altered. Since higher education was thought to have been accessible to everyone in Alberta, anyone who failed to take advantage of the opportunity had simply made a choice not to go. If this later turned out to have been inappropriate in terms of

the indiyidual's career or personal development, then by all means let there be an institution to provide him with a 'second chance' at the higher education he had missed out on as a youth, But the question of social class need not arise.

There was also, of course, some acknowledgement that geographical isolation from centres of higher education could act as a barrier to accessibility, and that an open university format could provide a solution through the provision of distance-education. However, it is important to note that it is the model's "correspondence" aspect which is being utilized here, not its "openness".

In any event, the desire for social reform which had been the motiye force behind the establishment of the Open University in England was replaced in Alberta with a conservative economic motive. Athabasca University in its open university format held the potential to 'put the lid' on higher education spending.

First, it could absorb any increase in enrolments, wherever in Alberta they occurred,without the need of either expanding existing facilities or building new local ones. Second, it was relatively cost effectiye in that part-time students remain in the labour force and continue to contribute to the provincial economy; the investment in their 'human captial' did not include foregone earnings, student loans, parental support, subsidized residences, and so on. Third, Athabasca University could 'cool out' the demand of the smaller urban centres for the construction of local post-secondary campuses by delivering similar transfer courses yia correspondence or through the local community college. Fourth, it could similarly 'cool out' the demand for more full-time university places by offering the student an opportunity for

part-time study. A student turned away from a conventional university for lack of room could be 'cooled out' on the grounds that if he were really serious about university he would take advantage of the opportunity afforded by Athabasca. Of course, many students may actually prefer part-time study (and full-time employment), and in making that choice reduce the pressure on conventional universities. Fifth, it could 'cool out' the demand for higher education on the part of marginal students. Rather than supporting these students through one or two years of expensive full-time study before they fail or dropout, Athabasca University allows them to attempt university level courses without a major investment by either the individual or the government.[4] Sixth and last, Athabasca University was also inexpensive in absolute terms, and did not require a major capital investment.

These economic benefits of Athabasca University, however, were all based on the *correspondence* or distance education aspect of the model, not its 'openness'. The fact that there were no entrance requirements was largely irrelevant as far as its ability to provide inexpensive higher education was concerned. By replacing the model's original social reform rationale with a conservative economic motive, the model's emphasis has shifted from its 'second chance' aspect to its distance education technology. Instead of an Open University which just happens to use correspondence courses to achieve its ends, Alberta has a correspondence institution which just happens to have unrestricted entry. 'Distance education' has become synonymous in most people's minds with 'open university', but the rationales behind a correspondence college and an open university are quite different.

The question then arises, if the Progressive Conservatives only

wanted a correspondence university to help contain rising costs, why was the model's 'open' or 'second chance' aspect retained at all?

The answer may be simply that the education elite presented the open university model as a sort of package deal. While the education elite was not prepared to think in terms of social class— and altered ideological basis of the open university model to fit their "phenomenological" model of equality of educational opportunity— they were nevertheless very much in favour of maximizing educational opportunities. The Progressive Conservatives, on the other hand, gave this a much lower priority and would not have supported an open university solely on the grounds of its 'openness'. However, having already accepted the model's potential in regard to distance education, it did not cost anything to make it an 'open' university while they were at it. In other words, it could be argued that while the Progressive Conservatives were funding a correspondence university, the education elite was building an open university, and that neither group disapproved of the other's motives.[5]

In any event, it is important to recognize that the (modified) open university model was as much a product of local developments as it was an import from England. As will be recalled from Chapter III, the major issue in Canadian higher education in the seventies was that of rising costs. In fact, it could be reasonably claimed that the escalating costs of higher education, and the growing disillusionment with the human capital model and its replacement with the manpower model, was a contributing factor in the Progressive Conservative victory over the Social Credit. The government was therefore actively seeking an alternative to conventional forms of higher education, and could very conceivably have invented the open university model independently, had it not already been available.

Similarly, the general trend towards recognizing the importance of part-time study and its steady growth during the seventies was a major support for the adoption of the model. Even the debate over sexism in higher education provided significant support for the open university model, since approximately 60% of Athabasca University's students are female, and women are as deserving of compensatory educational opportunities as working class males. And of course there was the need to find a new role for the suddenly redundant Athabasca University following the enrolment shortfalls of the early seventies.

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY AND THE HUMAN CAPITAL MODEL

The human capital model played a key role, not only in the emergence of Athabasca University, but in the formulation of all of higher education policy in Canada during the past thirty years. Each of the trends in higher education described in Chapters III and IV may be traced back to the adoption of the human capital model in the mid-1950s by governments and the education establishment.

Previously, under the enlightenment model, higher education had been viewed primarily as 'consumption' and the private preserve of the nation's 'cultured' elite. Under the human capital model, educaiton came to be seen as an 'investment' in the nation's 'human resources', and a precondition for economic development.

For the individual, investment in higher education (in the form of tuition, foregone earnings, etc.) represented an investment in his own skills and consequently in his wage-earning potential. For the state, investment in higher education represented an investment in the development of the nation's pool of skilled labour and consequently in its

potential for economic growth and income redistribution in a post-industrial society dependent upon trained manpower. Thus, both the demand for higher education on the part of high school graduates, and the desire to meet this demand on the part of governments, was encouraged by the human capital model. This, combined with the increase in the size of the 18-24 age cohort (due to the post-war baby boom) led to massive expansion of post-secondary education in Canada during the 1960s.

In addition to this expansion of scale, the human captial model also encouraged the expansion of the type of post-secondary education available by stressing the economy's need for technicians. This led to the diversification of post-secondary education as technical institutes and community colleges were developed and expanded, and universities added more vocationally oriented faculties to their campuses.

As both types of expansion were premised on the economic and vocational usefulness of the graduates, higher education became subtly 'vocationalized' as the enlightenment model's theme of 'intellectual and cultural enrichment' gave way to the human capital model's emphasis on 'vocational preparation'.

These two developments— that is, the expansion and vocationalization of higher education— led in turn to all the secondary trends described in Chapter III: the provincial encroachment on the traditional autonomy of the universities; reform of the administrative structure; student unrest; the search for a redefinition of the role of higher education; and even the interest in innovation. And, as has already been described in this chapter, Athabasca University's original mandate was in turn a product of these trends.

Contrary to the expectations of the human capital model, however, neither the economy nor university enrolments continued to expand indefinitely. Enrolment slowdowns were experienced during the early 197Qs as the production of graduates outstripped demand, leaving many degree holders either unemployed or underemployed. Potential students and their parents began to question the vocational usefulness and economic return of general undergraduate degrees. The human capital model was challenged as its predicted outcomes (both in education and in the larger social and economic context) failed to materialize. Consequently, it was replaced by the more narrowly interpreted manpower model.

Under the manpower model, the major issue in higher education became one of finance. Governments everywhere sought to cut back their investment in an 'industry' that seemed unable to provide (or at least to demonstrate) a satsifactory economic return. Post-secondary institutions were encouraged to limit growth in faculties where there was little demand for graduates on the labour market and to greatly expand those facilities which produced 'marketable' graduates. Higher education became thoroughly 'vocationalized' as increasing emphasis was given to its role in manpower training with a corresponding de-emphasis of its intellectual and cultural mission.

In Alberta, the human capital model was represented by the Social Credit Party (as explicitly set forth in the White Paper on Human Resources) and the education elite (as can be seen in the Worth Report). The manpower model was represented by the Progressive Conservative Party, as is implicit in their insistence that the needs of the economy should take precedence over the needs of individuals (since the former is seen

as a prerequisite for the latter). The electoral victory of the Progressive Conservatives over the Social Credit in 1971 therefore also represented a shift towards the manpower model over the human capital model in Alberta.

But the replacement of the human capital model by the manpower model was not complete, for the election could not immediately affect the education elite, which still subscribed to the human capital model. This was crucial to Athabasca University. Created under the assumptions of the human capital model, it was threatened with dismantlement under the manpower model. Thus, while the Progressive Conservatives immediately called for a 'review' of all capital projects (including the apparently redundant fourth university) following their election, the education elite was still prepared to defend Athabasca University and its unique academic design.

This 'ideological tension' between the governing party and the education elite was never clearly articulated as such, however. Both models were based on the premise that higher education represents a form of investment rather than consumption, and that the role of post-secondary education was vocational more than intellectual or cultural. Both groups therefore perceived themselves as in fundamental agreement and believed that any disagreement was merely a question of specifics. The debate over the development of a fourth university was seen as a difference in emphasis or interpretation, rather than a difference in outlook.

But the differences between the two models is real and significant. The human capital model focuses on the inputs to the system (that is, the demands of potential students for entrance) and assumes that the

outputs (the graduates) will be necessary and useful; whereas the manpower model focuses on the outputs (the demand for graduates) and attempts to control inputs accordingly. In other words, higher education systems were 'input determined' under the human capital model, but 'output determined' under the manpower model.

Thus, the education elite argued that the fourth university would still be needed because enrolments (inputs) could still be expected to rise, while the Progressive Conservatives argued against it on the grounds that the economic return (outputs) of universities was not sufficiently demonstrated (relative to other economic priorities) to warrant further capital investment. As explained earlier in this chapter, Athabasca University's continuation, first as a pilot project and later as a correspondence university, represented a compromise between the Progressive Conservatives' desire for economic restraint and the education elite's desire for the expansion of educational opportunities.

In addition to the role played by these two models in whether or not there was to be a fourth university, much of Athabasca University's academic design can be seen as stemming, directly or indirectly, from the human capital/manpower models. For example, even in its original academic concept, Athabasca University was to make "no distinctions between liberal and vocational" education, and there was to be a problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach to curriculum design, which may be seen as reflecting the vocationalization of higher education and the movement away from the enlightenment model.[6]

> The university must assume more responsibility for helping students find useful vocational outlets for their education, and for making them aware that particular fields of study, though enriching in themselves, do not readily lead to employment possibilities. The university must accept

> responsibility for the vocational preparation not only of graduates of its professional schools, but also of those who have followed more general programs.[7]

Here can be seen not only the human capital model's interest in vocational preparation, but the manpower model's insistence on the university's responsibility to produce graduates for which there is a demand on the labour market

Other aspects of the original academic concept reflected the secondary trends in higher education which resulted from the adoption of the human capital model and the subsequent expansion of the higher education system.

Athabasca University's shift to a correspondence institution dealing with part-time students can also be related to the human capital and manpower models. Interest in part-time university students increased throughout Canada as the number of full-time students enrolling started to fall below predicted levels. Administrators desperate for per capita grants turned to the still rapidly increasing number of part-time students to 'fill the gap'. But this was acceptable partly because the enlightenment model, which included the concept of the 'cloistered scholar', was giving way to the human capital model's concept of 'value added' and 'vocational preparation' which could take place on a part-time or recurrent basis as easily as with the full-time students. Furthermore, part-time studies had the additional advantage of leaving the student free for full-time employment. As a productive and tax-paying citizen, both the society and the individual saved a considerable investment through part-time studies while still obtaining the same economic and social returns (if admittedly somewhat delayed by the necessity of stretching part-time studies over a longer period). The

correspondence aspect merely makes the administration of part-time studies more manageable as students may work when and where they like, and at their own pace.

In the case of Athabasca University, the adoption of the open university concept and a clientele of part-time students was also both expedient for the survival of the institution and a useful method of 'cooling out' various demands for the further expansion of the higher education, thereby serving the education elite and the Progressive Conservative government, each acting under their respective models.

There is, however, one sense in which the emergence of a correspondence university for part-time students can be seen as going against the manpower model. The manpower model is primarily concerned with 'outputs', and specifically, with fitting graduates to the needs of the labour market; but part-time students are by definition *already* employed (or, as in the case of housewives, engaged in other forms of useful labour) which would seem to make their further education somewhat redundant. Of course, such a facility could operate to provide students with opportunities for career advancement, professional upgrading, or a lateral transfer to a second career. All of these functions are becoming increasingly important in modern society as knowledge and career positions become obsolete at an accelerating rate, but does Athabasca University actually limit itself to this vocational role?

Athabasca University offers three degrees: Bachelor of General Studies (B.G.S.), Bachelor of Administration (B.Adm.), and Bachelor of Arts (B.A.).[7] The B.G.S. degree is clearly a creation of the human capital model, for it is granted for any combination of accredited courses (including those of non-university programs) which implies an

acceptance of that model's contention that *any* post-secondary training is beneficial and useful. Similarly, the development of the B.Adm. program is consistant with the human capital/manpower models since it is both career-oriented and a field which the business-minded Progressive Conservatives perceive as important and useful. But the vocational relevance of the B.A. degree is much harder to demonstrate, particularly in the case of Athabasca University's students since most of them have already embarked on their chosen careers prior to their (part-time) enrolment.

Similarly, course offerings range from 'career specific' to 'general interest', divided into the four broad categories of: 'applied', 'science', 'social science', and the 'humanities'.[8] The B.G.S. degree is also designated as being either 'Applied Studies', or 'Liberal Studies', though the latter is noted as having "slightly more emphasis on applied subjects than does the B.A.(Liberal Studies)."[9] While the university anticipates developing programs of specific concentrations for the B.A. in the future, it is currently only available with the 'Liberal Studies' designation.

Thus it is clear that Athabasca University's programs are not strictly limited to vocational or professional training. In fact, only about 40% of the students registering at Athabasca University cite career reasons for doing so.[10] The majority of its students cite either educational or personal reasons; that is, they are seeking either a degree, or some form of self-fulfilment.[11] This indicates a 'liberal arts' function which cannot be accounted for by reference to either the human capital or manpower models.

It is tempting to dismiss this apparent anomaly as simply an

anachronism, a holdover from the traditional university. This might have been a plausible explanation had Athabasca been an old established university with deeply entrenched practices evolving over a period of many years, but this is clearly not the case. Athabasca University is not only a completely new university, but one explicitly mandated to innovation. Far from being an inflexible, tradition-ridden institution, Athabasca University underwent two fundamental transitions (from four year college to pilot project to open university) before it had even opened its doors. Having been redesigned from the ground up at least twice, there can be no question but that every aspect of its operation was deliberately and thoughtfully planned.

One possible explanation is that this 'liberal arts' function was included as part of the 'package deal' presented to the Progressive Conservative government by the education elite. As with the open admissions policy which the government accepted as an almost incidental feature of the correspondence mission given to Athabasca University, it may be that the government was prepared to accept a liberal arts component as part of the compromise which permitted Athabasca to continue as a university. In other words, the government may have allowed political considerations to override the precepts of the manpower model.

A more likely explanation, however, is that the government was favourably disposed to the development of liberal arts and 'general interest' courses at Athabasca University, because this was perceived as relatively inexpensive when compared to the alternative of expanding these programs at other colleges and universities. As explained in Chapter VI, Athabasca University held the potential to reduce the costs of higher education through (a) eliminating the need for students to give

up full-time employment, (b) eliminating the need to build more community colleges (since Athabasca's correspondence courses are accessible to all parts of the province), (c) reducing the need for more full-time student places on existing campuses (30% of Athabasca University students stated that they would choose Athabasca even if other options were available[12]), (d) 'cooling out' marginal students, and (e) achieving cost effectiveness through the development of a relatively inexpensive course delivery system. Thus, investment in the liberal arts/non-vocational component of Athabasca University is seen as appropriate under the manpower model, inasmuch as it reduces or contains the investment in this component for the higher education system as a whole.

This has rather profound implications, for it represents *the alienation of the liberal arts function from the traditional universities*. Under the enlightenment model, universities had been primarily concerned with the cultivation of the intellect and personal development, and vocational interests had been perceived as an almost incidental byproduct of these activities. Higher education was viewed primarily as consumption, a result of economic prosperity rather than a cause. Under the human capital model, universities came to view higher education as providing direct and immediate benefits to the economic and social development of the nation, as well as that of the individual. Higher education was viewed as an investment for both the society and the individual, and that the needs of the former could best be met by meeting the needs of the latter. Now, under the manpower model, universities were encouraged to see their main function as vocational preparation, and the needs of the economy were placed ahead of those of the individual. Courses and programs which offered the student opportunities for self-

actualization outside of a vocational context were shunted off the main campus to a new type of facility.

The relationship of these three models may be seen in Chart 7-1. Movement from left to right represents four associated trends: (1) a shift from an emphasis on the needs of the individual to the needs of the economy; (2) a shift in the cost burden from the individual to the society; (3) a shift in control from the universities to governments; and (4) a transition in scale from elite to mass institutions. Each of these parallel developments is interdependent, as it is unlikely that any of them could have emerged without the others.

CHART 7-1

MODELS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Enlightenment Model	→	Human Captial Model	→	Manpower Model
Needs of the individual given priority	→	Needs of the individual seen as converging with needs of the society	→	Needs of society given priority
Costs borne by the individual (consumption)	→	Costs shared by the individual and the society (investment)	→	Cost borne by the society (investment)
Universities autonomous	→	Universities autonomous units within a provincial system	→	Universities controlled by governments
Universities elite institutions	→	Universities become mass institutions	→	Universities part of universal post-secondary education

NOTE: The above represent 'ideal types' and may not exist in pure form.

Under the manpower model, then, one would expect non-vocational programs to be of decreasing importance, and every effort made to reduce the government's investment in them, because they are not thought to produce a direct economic return. In other words, some university

programs once again are viewed as consumption, whereas under the human capital model, *all* forms of higher education were seen as representing investment. Of course, even as consumption, these programs are perceived as worthy of *some* government support, in much the same way the government supports other cultural activities such as symphony orchestras, live theatre, and museums.

Turning again to Athabasca University, a portion of its offerings may be understood in terms of the vocational development and upgrading function expected of universities under the manpower model, while the remainder can be understood as being the consequence of the alienation of non-career programs from the conventional universities; that is, the general interest courses are supported as a cultural function operating outside the parameters of the manpower model. The question then arises, however, that if this non-vocational function does not fit under the manpower model per se, where does it fit?

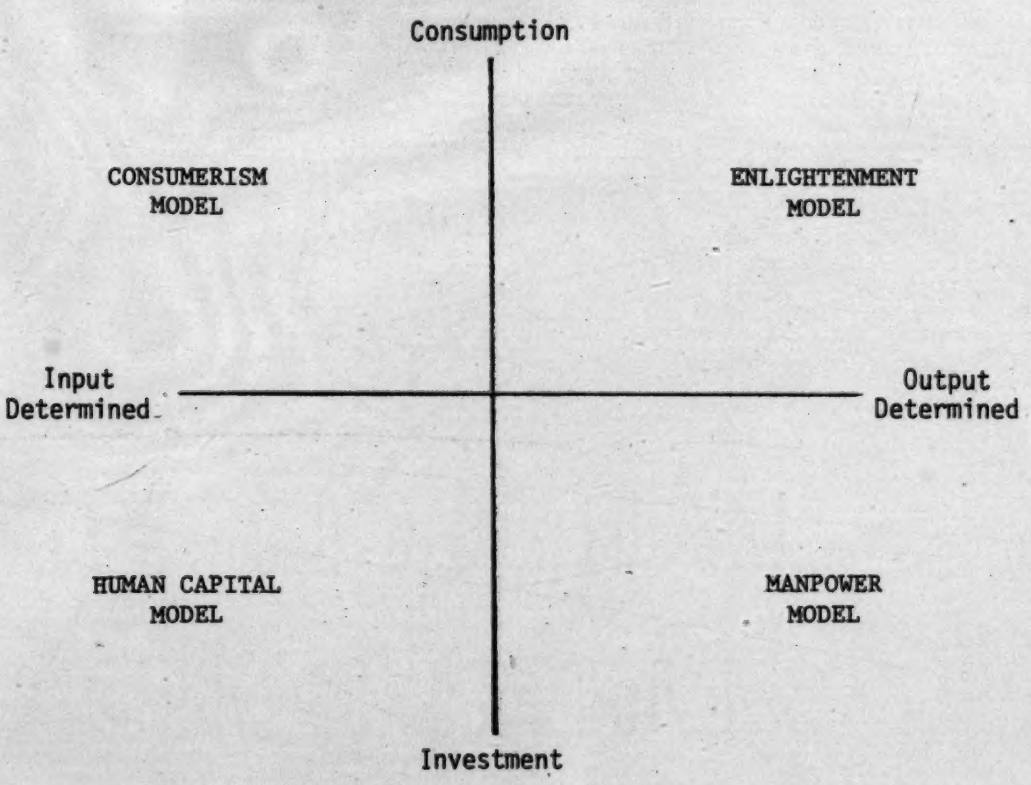
These general interest courses are clearly not a product of the human capital model since they are recognized as a form of individual consumption, with only the most indirect benefits accruing to the economy. But neither are they a product of the enlightenment model, for they are offered by a mass, rather than an elite, institution. Furthermore, the enlightenment model included both the concept of the 'cloistered scholar' and an absolute standard against which the 'educated gentleman' was measured. The former is obviously absent from a correspondence university for part-time students, and the latter is incompatible with Athabasca's 'cafeteria' style course offerings.[13]

Thus, as this non-career function fits none of the models, it is necessary to define a fourth model of higher education to account for it.

For the purposes of this thesis, this will be referred to as the "consumerism model".

FIGURE 7-1

THE FOUR MODELS OF HIGHER EDUCATION



The relationship of these four models may be seen in Figure 7-1. The enlightenment model and the consumerism model both view higher education as intrinsically valuable regardless of its vocational relevance, in contrast to the human capital and manpower models which both view higher education as a means to social and economic development. Both the human capital and consumerism models see higher education as 'input determined', with universities responding to the demands

and 'market choices' of students. Both the manpower and enlightenment models see higher education as 'output determined', with post-secondary institutions responding to the needs of the labour market and the economy in the former, and to the intellectual standards of the 'cultured gentleman' in the latter.

Just as the manpower model can be seen as a refinement or descendent of the human capital model, the consumerism model is the modern version of the enlightenment model. Where once the ideological tension over the function of the university was between advocates of the enlightenment model and the human capital model, today it is between advocates of the consumerism model and the manpower model.

The consumerism model is particularly evident in discussions of what might be termed "recreational education". To quote the Worth Report:

> ...as the people of this province find themselves in possession of increased leisure time, their need to fill it with some meaningful activity will increase. Many will turn to further education for the enrichment associated with learning for pleasure. Still others will see institutions or learning systems offering instruction in activities associated directly with leisure or off-job time as a means of developing skills leading to what today might be thought of as non-careers — a kind of personally gratifying and socially sanctioned avocationalism.[14]

This leisure function is one for which a correspondence university for part-time students is particularly suited, since students can work on courses anywhere, at any level, and at their own pace. In fact, about 30% of Athabasca University students are taking courses purely as a form of recreation.[15]

Practically every educational institution is involved with recreational education and the consumerism model at some point. Twice

a year The Edmonton Journal publishes an "Educational Supplement" listing a host of evening and weekend classes offered by Public and Separate School Boards, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, Grant MacEwan Community College, and the Department of Extension of the University of Alberta. Not only does this represent a vast choice of courses (and of times, locations, instructors, levels of difficulty, and costs) from which the potential student may choose (that is, courses are 'input determined') but it is also a mass market, mass media level of curriculums. Instead of courses in Latin or classical Greek, one finds belly-dancing lessons, ski classes, pottery courses, and cooking lessons, all of which would have been unthinkable under the enlightenment model. Of course, there are also a good many more 'serious' courses offered as well, some of which may even be of vocational relevance, but the emphasis is always on providing the student with the knowledge that *he* requests, rather than training him to the intellectual standard of the enlightenment model or to satisfy a particular need in the labour market.

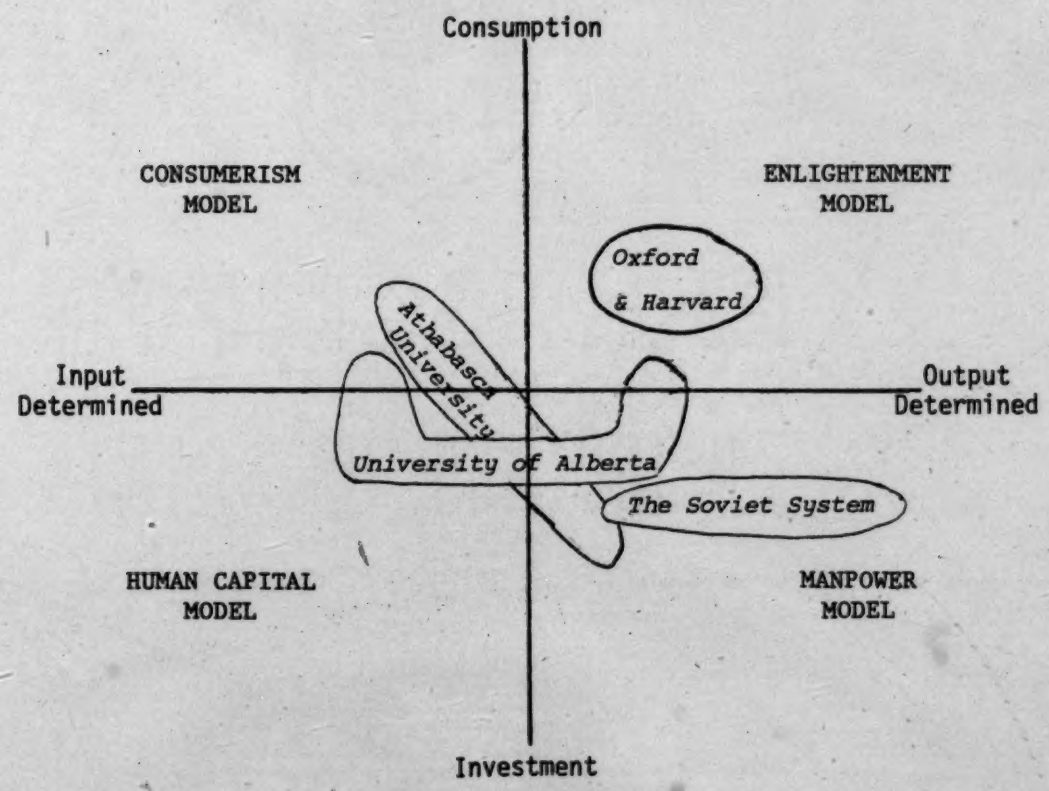
It should be emphasized, however, that these four models are not entirely mutually exclusive. Athabasca University operates under both the manpower and consumerism models, and as has just been seen, most other secondary and post-secondary institutions offer some form of recreational education under the consumerism model as well. A single course or program can often be seen to come under both the manpower and consumerism model as some students register for career reasons while others take it purely for personal satisfaction. A single administrator or individual will often switch back and forth from one model to the next as each serves the purpose of the moment, without being conscious

of any contradiction in his position.

This interpenetration of the four models makes categorizing particular institutions or groups somewhat imprecise. Nevertheless, one can generally identify which model predominates in a particular system and classify it accordingly. A few examples are suggested in Figure 7-2.

FIGURE 7-2

HIGHER EDUCATION CLASSIFIED BY THE FOUR MODELS



Oxford and Harvard (with the possible exception of the Harvard Business School which operates under the human captial model) are good examples of universities still operating primarily under the enlightenment model. Both are elite institutions. Both have sufficient prestige

to resist government encroachments and remain relatively autonomous. Both are examples of higher education as consumption, since the prestige accorded to graduates is considerably greater than that of graduates of equivalent programs at other schools. And finally, they are both 'output' determined, in that programs are determined by a clear conception of the intellectual and cultural standard expected of the 'Oxford graduate' or the 'Harvard man'.

The Soviet education system is an excellent example of the manpower model, since faculty quotas are set and students assigned according to the needs of the economy. Similarly, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology attempts to be very responsive to the needs of the labour market, adding and deleting course offerings accordingly. Both are mass rather than elite and both see higher education as investment.

The University of Alberta has elements of all four models, but is primarily operating under the human capital/manpower models. During the 1950s and 1960s, it could have been classified almost entirely under the human capital model, but has recently been moving towards the manpower model. The University is increasingly responsive to pressure from the Progressive Conservative government to be more sensitive to the needs of the labour market, and tends to expand programs only in those areas where graduates are needed.[16] Nevertheless, it remains responsive to the needs and demands of incoming students as well, and continues to provide programs of limited vocational application, such as degrees in classics and philosophy. These are still thought of as representing investment rather than consumption, since all intellectual development is perceived as ultimately practical. The Provincial government has made significant inroads on the University's autonomy over

the past twenty years, and the University has become fully integrated into a provincial post-secondary system.

Athabasca University, as previously mentioned, was developed under the human capital model, but now operates under both the consumerism and manpower models, with perhaps some residual belief in the human capital model. Grant MacEwan and other community colleges of that type are in a similar position. The vocational programs are thought of as representing investment, while the recreational educational courses are clearly consumption. The vocational sector is responsive to the requirements of the labour market and designs its programs accordingly. The recreational sector is responsive to the requests and preferences of potential students. Both functions are intended for a mass market rather than just an intellectual elite. Institutional autonomy exists more on paper than in practice, as may be seen by the recent arbitrary relocation of Athabasca University.[17]

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY AND EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Under its original mandate, Athabasca University was to be established as an undergraduate facility restricted to arts, science and education. As such, it might well have become the 'middle rung' in the prestige hierarchy of Alberta's higher education system. As a degree granting university it would have had more prestige than a community college, but without post-graduate facilities it would have ranked below the University of Alberta and the University of Calgary, and at best on an equal level with the similarly restricted University of Lethbridge.

It was explicitly intended to absorb some of the demand for

university entrance and remove some of the pressure from the University of Alberta. It is conceivable that such an institution could also become a barrier to the attainment of higher education for minority or lower class students by providing a lower status social track into which these less 'suitable' students could be shunted. As explained in Chapter II, this was not an uncommon result of similar developments in the United States.

On the other hand, the innovative design of Athabasca University, even in its original academic concept, was thought to be sufficiently different from the programs offered at the University of Alberta that it could attract an equal share of first rate students, and thereby avoid becoming the 'second choice' of students rejected by the more prestigious institution. While one tends to be skeptical of such 'separate but equal' arguments, in this case it might very well have worked.

In any event, the point quickly became moot as planning on Athabasca University was first suspended and then later redirected to become an 'open' university.

As will be recalled from Chapter VI, the 'open' university model adopted in Alberta was almost completely devoid of any reference to the need to provide a 'second chance' at higher education for those who had been deprived of it due to their lower or working class backgrounds. While this had been the driving motivation behind the establishment of the Open University in England, social class was not even recognized as a vaild issue in Alberta by either the education elite or the general public. Nevertheless, the open admissions policy was retained, and it is still conceivable that Athabasca University represents a significant

expansion of educational opportunities in Alberta, even if there is little reference to the social class origins of inequality.

The first question, then, is how accessible is Athabasca University? "Our goal is to make university education accessible to, and possible for, any adult Albertan who wants it"[18] is the claim made on the first page of the 1979/80 Calendar, and Athabasca's unique design does offer a number of advantages in this regard.

First, tuition is reasonable and easily within reach of all but the most destitute. Since the student pays by the course, the cost is also spread over a much longer period than at a conventional university and, as with any installment payment, this may also add to its accessibility.[19]

Second, the student does not have to give up full-time employment to undertake his studies, thus eliminating a major financial barrier for many students. Sixteen per cent of Athabasca University students gave this as their reason for choosing Athabasca.[20]

Third, students study at home, thus eliminating the geographical barriers of isolation from centres of higher education. Thirty per cent of its students gave this as their reason for choosing Athabasca University.[21]

Fourth, students study whenever they like thus enabling them to fit courses into their own schedule, no matter how flexible that may have to be, and they can study at their own pace (within the overall course time limit). Another thirty per cent listed this as their reason for choosing Athabasca University.[22] Students can also suspend their studies for up to six months per course should other matters intrude on their study time.[23]

Finally, the open admissions policy and the extreme flexibility of the programs means that students who would not qualify for entrance at other institutions, or who do not wish to follow the set programs that other colleges offer, can still seek higher education through Athabasca University. Twenty-five per cent of its students gave this as their reason for choosing Athabasca University.[24]

All these factors would tend to support the conclusion that Athabasca University has taken its 'open door' policy about as far as is feasible.

The catch, however, is that potential students must first *hear* about these opportunities. Athabasca University has the lowest profile of any Alberta university, its commendable efforts to the contrary notwithstanding, and there is some reason to believe that those who could most benefit from Athabasca University's openness are the least likely to learn of its existence. The worker who listens to 'top 40' radio and reads the comics in The Sun is less likely to come across reference to Athabasca University than is the middle or upper class individual who listens to the CBC and reads the Edmonton Journal's "Education Supplement". Of course this is offset somewhat by the presence of Athabasca University on television, though even here it is limited to those who subscribe to one of the cable services and may therefore be unavailable to those outside the major urban centres or to the economically deprived.

Moreover, the very term "university" may itself turn away potential students before they have had a chance to discover the unique opportunities offered by Athabasca. Students who have been consistantly "streamed" into non-academic programs in high school (or at even lower

grade levels), or whose family, social class, or ethnic background discourage aspirations for higher education, or those who fear the financial burden of conventional university programs, may simply 'tune out' what information is availble to them on Athabasca University because they have previously concluded that 'university' is not for them.

This psychological barrier is not generally recognized by the education elite in Alberta. Under their "phenomenological model" of educational opportunity, "which views opportunity as a function of the hopes, desires, and aspirations of the individual,"[25] if a student does not see higher education as 'relevant' to his needs, this is of no concern to educators. According to this model, equality of educational opportunity is achieved when all those who *demand* it are given access—— but there is no guarantee that all those who could *benefit* from higher education are given equal opportunities to develop the prerequisite aspirations.

Thus, in terms of accessibility, how *effective* the opportunity offered by Athabasca University really is, remains somewhat ambiguous.

The second question, then, is how successful are Athabasca University students in obtaining their educational goals? As suggested in Chapter II, the 'open door' policy of some community colleges in the United States actually resulted in *fewer* minority and lower class students obtaining bachelor degrees, as they were redirected into terminal vocational programs or otherwise 'cooled out'. Is this also the case with Athabasca University?

At this point, it is still too early to provide a definitive answer. Part-time studies are by nature a very slow process, and Athabasca

University is still too new a facility for a significant number of its students to have completed a degree. Furthermore, since part-time studies are often interrupted by lengthy periods of inactivity as the student copes with other, more pressing demands on his time and energies, students who currently appear to have dropped out may ultimately return and finish their degrees.[26] Consequently, it will take at least another five years before Athabasca University will have been in operation long enough to enable research to answer this question properly.

In the meantime, however, it should be possible to indicate one or two general factors which might influence the ultimate outcome. On the one hand, Athabasca University does provide a unique opportunity in Alberta to obtain a degree without incurring heavy debts or foregoing the immediate benefits of full-time employment. It may therefore be not only accessible to, but successful with, those students who dropped out or avoided conventional universities for purely financial reasons. The same applies to those who chose Athabasca University for geographical or scheduling reasons. Since these students may prove to be the equals, academically, of students at conventional universities, there is little reason to assume that their progress through the program would be other than successful. Furthermore, the gratifying success of the Open University of England would seem to indicate that this will in fact be the case.

On the other hand, there is some suggestion that obtaining a degree by correspondence is considerably more difficult than obtaining the same degree by attendance at a conventional university.[27] The correspondence institution cannot provide the same student-instructor or student-student relationships. The supportive comradery of campus life is absent. The

vast resources of a conventional university's library and laboratories cannot be adequately duplicated. And the necessity of spreading part-time studies over a long period may make the goal of a degree seem to fade ever further into the distant future. Athabasca University's students require greater motivation, initiative, and persistence than their fellows who study on some campus.

However, Athabasca University and other institutions of its kind are quite aware of these problems and take what counter-measures as they are able. In this regard, then, one must conclude that the University does all within its power to provide equality of educational success for these students.

But this still leaves to be considered the twenty-five per cent of its students who enroled at Athabasca University because of its 'openness', that is, those who lacked the prerequisite skills and knowledge to obtain university entrance elsewhere. It was to this group that the 'open door' policy of American community colleges was directed in the hope of providing compensatory programs and access to higher education. And it was primarily these 'marginal' students who were 'cooled out' and/or shunted into terminal vocational programs.

In Chapter VI it was suggested that the greater difficulty and longer duration of a degree program at Athabasca University could be used to 'cool out' the 'academically unfit' without the expense of supporting the potential failure through a year or two of full-time study. After one or two attempts at undertaking a university course in the isolation of correspondence study, and with the course in competition with the other demands on his time, the marginal student may abandon his university aspirations as 'unrealistic'. Not only

would he become convinced that he could never last the seven or more years required to complete his degree through part-time study with Athabasca University, but he is likely to become convinced that all university programs are too difficult for him.

On the other hand, the same argument could be turned inside-out to suggest that the 'marginal' student would be *better* able to cope with one or two courses at a time, and paced at his own rate rather than one set by the professor's lecture schedule. Students whose social class or ethnic backgrounds might have made them feel out of place on a conventional campus, may feel better able to cope with study undertaken in the privacy of their own home. And of course there is the possibility that the 'marginal' student's successful completion of one or two courses by correspondence may be sufficiently encouraging to prompt their transfer and commitment to full-time study.

One result that can be ruled out, however, is that of 'marginal' students being shunted into non-academic streams at Athabasca University. Since Athabasca *is* a university, rather than a community college, there *are no* non-academic or terminal vocational programs. While many of Athabasca University's courses may be categorized as vocational preparation, these are still degree, rather than merely certificate, programs. The only danger in this regard is that Athabasca University might use its credit co-ordinating function to encourage its 'marginal' students to seek vocational courses at other post-secondary institutions, and then to 'return for their B.G.S.' degree, thereby effectively incorporating other institutions' certificate programs into their own and thus creating a lower 'stream' into which to shunt 'marginal' students.

Thus, Athabasca University's potential for promoting the academic success of 'marginal' students, or alternatively, acting as a 'cooling out' agency, remains ambiguous.

The third question is, what effect is a degree from Athabasca University likely to have on social and economic mobility.

Once again, the immediate answer is that it is too early to provide a definitive answer. The handful of graduates from Athabasca University are too few to be able to draw any conclusions about the value of their degree on the labour market. The best that can be done at this time is to indicate some general factors which might have some influence on this.

In all probability, a degree from Athabasca University will initially have considerably less prestige than one from any of the other provincial universities. First of all, as a correspondence institution, Athabasca University will have to overcome the stigma attached to the 'mail order degree'. Most people still think of correspondence courses in terms of "Famous Disc Jockeys School of Radio Announcing" and similar fly-by-night operations of questionable academic quality. This image of correspondence education may change as more people and employers become familiar with, not only Athabasca University, but the work of the Open University in England and similar institutions throughout the world. Eventually, it may be recognized that a degree obtained by correspondence and part-time study requires greater persistence, etc., from the student, and that employers will therefore come to value a degree from Athabasca University over those from other universities——but this remains to be seen.

Second, as the province's newest university, it has yet to 'prove itself' thrcugh the attainments of its alumni. The reputation of the University of Alberta has been established over a period of seventy-five years, and while the other two universities have had considerably shorter histories, they still predate Athabasca. Since the number of graduates will remain very small for Athabasca University for the next ten years at least, it is likely that it will take an especially long time for it to 'catch up' to the prestige of its sister university in regard to alumni.

Third, without a large and impressive physical campus, Athabasca University remains almost invisible to most Albertans. The prestige of a set of correspondence materials is much harder for the average citizen to gauge than the relative size of a campus. No campus often equals no prestige in the mind of the casual observer.

Fourth, in addition to its short history and the 'vagueness' of its presence, it also has to contend with the fact that it is restricted to undergraduate degrees, and thus with the prestige problems of a four year college. Without post-graduate facilities, both employers and other education professionals will remain skeptical of its ability to attract and hold top quality staff. This problem has recently been compounded by Athabasca University's relocation to a relatively isolated northern Alberta community.

One possible exception to the above may be the graduate who seeks employment outside the province. To an eastern Canadian or American empolyer, "Athabasca University" may sound as impressive an institution as the University of Calgary or Lethbridge, as it is unlikely that they have ever heard of any of them.

In addition to these problems with the prestige of the institution, there are also problems with the titles of the degrees themselves. The lack of specified concentrations for the B.A. degree may tell against it in some employment situations. The B.Adm. degree is unfamiliar to most employers, though it may sound like the sort of degree they had always wished Alberta universities would produce. But the B.G.S. degree is very nearly a dead loss. Not only is it totally unfamiliar, Athabasca University itself will not vouch for its validity:

> The B.G.S. (Applied Studies) itself does not guarantee vocational competence: it simply records the AU courses taken and/or the courses for which transfer credit has been given. The University will affirm only that the student has completed an amount and level of work equivalent to that normally required for a three-year undergraduate degree.[28]

Faced with such a disclaimer, it is questionable if many employers are likely to take it seriously at all.

As a means to upward social and economic mobility, a degree from Athabasca University would seem to have less weight than the same degree from another university. While the B.A. and B.Adm. degrees may carry more weight than a certificate from a community college and perhaps even more than a technical institute, this is probably *not* true of the B.G.S., at least until such a time as it is adopted by other universities as well.

Thus, to the extent that students are turned away from the conventional universities and accommodated at Athabasca University instead, their upward mobility is being *blocked*, because a degree from Athabasca University may turn out to be worth *less* on the labour market than a degree from anywhere else. On the other hand, to the extent that Athabasca University provides an opportunity for students to enter

higher education at a university instead of a community college or technical institute, their upward mobility *is* being promoted— with the possible exception of those enrolled in the B.G.S. (Applied Studies) program. In either event, the number of students enrolled in degree programs and/or graduating from Athabasca University is so small that it is unlikely that Athabasca University will have any significant impact on either social mobility or social tracking in Alberta, at least in the near future.

What is of significance are ideological implications for the equality of educational opportunity implicit in the emergence of Athabasca University.

As will be recalled from Chapter II, equality of educational opportunity was a non-issue under the enlightenment model, since higher education was viewed as a form of consumption. Universities were unashamedly elite insitituions, with only the barest provision made for the most deserving members of the lower orders through scholarship funds. As consumption, higher education was a luxury enjoyed by the elite like any other rewards and privileges of that class. And, as consumption, higher education was seen as 'inappropriate' for the lower and working classes who could neither afford it, nor make use of it in their destined vocations. While it is true that higher education was always involved with vocational preparation to some extent, the causation was reversed; that is, one sought the level of education appropriate to one's future vocation, rather than having one's vocation determined by the level of one's education.

Moreover, under the enlightenment model, higher education was 'output determined'. Since the major concern was with the quality of

the graduate, it seemed to simply make sense to recruit only the very top students of the secondary schools, and not to worry overly about the equality of educational opportunity— inputs were not important except inasmuch as they affected outputs.

The emergence of the human capital model completely reversed this picture, since it depicted higher education as an investment in human capital. The education system underwent the transition from elite to mass institutions, and became 'input determined' instead of 'output determined'. As investment, higher education was no longer a luxury, but an economic necessity. Inequalities in educational opportunities necessarily implied an over-investment in the privileged and an under-investment in the deserving. As level of education came to determine one's vocation, accessibility to higher education and 'inputs' became all-important. Equality of educational opportunity became an issue not for moral reasons, but for economic ones.

Athabasca University emerged under the human capital model and even in its later open university format, the question of accessibility was always more closely tied to the economic imperatives of the human capital model than to democratic sentiment or concern over class inequalities. For example, in the government's proposal for Athabasca University's "role and mandate" of June, 1975, the rationale behind establishing a non-conventional university was given as:

> 1. A latent pool of underdeveloped human capital exists in all countries.
> 2. The underdeveloped adult population is responsive to the tradition that degree level educational attainment enhances social and economic mobility.
> 3. Prevailing university-level opportunities do not satisfy the educational needs and aspirations of this latent pool.[29]

Here can be clearly seen not only the *economic* motive behind the desire to accommodate those whose "educational needs and aspirations" have been left unsatisfied by the conventional universities, but also the emphasis on the latent *demand* for higher education; that is, that the system is 'input determined'. What is being argued in the above quotation is not that there is a need for more graduates of a specific type, but that there is a "latent pool of underdeveloped human capital" which could benefit from further education. This is in sharp contrast with the manpower model.

Under the manpower model, equality of educational opportunity becomes both more crucial and less emphasized. The ever increasing vocationalization of higher education under the manpower model means that economic and social tracking are tied even more closely to educational attainment than under the human capital model. As the value of high school matriculation undergoes 'inflation' on the labour market, and as careers are tied to more specific educational qualifications, the potential for upward social mobility outside the expected educational routes becomes increasingly small. Thus, access to higher education becomes of vital importance to one's life chances, and equality of educational opportunity is a moral imperative.

At the same time, however, equality of educational opportunity ceases to be perceived as of economic importance. Whereas under the 'input determined' human capital model, equality of educational opportunity was regarded as a means of discovering the best 'human resources' and therefore a necessary technique for determining appropriate investment, investment under the 'output determined' manpower model is primarily based on the need for specific numbers of graduates, and

consequently the underdevelopment of 'redundant' human resources is seen as irrelevant. In other words, while equality of educational opportunity was (supposedly) ensured under the human capital model through provision of as many university places as there were students with the requisite talent and aspirations, equality of educational opportunity is threatened under the manpower model by the limitation of university places to the number of graduates required by the labour market. Of course these more limited educational opportunities could still be distributed on an equitable basis, and educators and governments remain under the moral imperative to see that this is done, but the *economic* motive is removed once it has been established that there is a surplus of 'human resources' over the 'human capital' requirements of the economy.[30] Thus, even though higher education under the manpower model is still viewed as a form of 'investment' rather than consumption, the nature of that investment is such as to work against the provision of equality of educational opportunity.

It therefore follows that as the manpower model slowly replaced the human capital model in Alberta the emphasis on the need for the equality of educational opportunity would diminish, as in fact has happened, as illustrated by the alterations in the 'open' university model adopted by Athabasca University. The *key* shift in the issue of equality of educational opportunity, however, for both the province as a whole and Athabasca University in particular, was the adoption of the consumerism model.

Under the consumerism model, the question of equality of educational opportunity once again becomes a non-issue. Like the human capital model, the consumerism model is 'input determined', but like the enlightenment

model, it also views higher education as a form of 'consumption'. To the extent that it *is* consumption, as opposed to an investment in vocational preparation or career advancement, it is also divorced from any function in economic mobility. (Leisure time, recreational education may still have a slight role in social mobility, but probably more as a socially acceptable form of 'conspicuous consumption' than as a requirement for upward mobility.) As consumption, equality of educational opportunity is no more pressing or significant than equality of access to television, travel, theatre, or any of the other elements of a comfortable modern lifestyle. Access to higher education is once again seen as a function of social-economic attainment, rather than the other way around.

Unlike the enlightenment model, however, higher education under the consumerism model is 'democratic'. Athabasca University and the various extension departments of other education facilities are mass rather than elite institutions. Higher education under the consumerism model is 'input determined', such that its course offerings are in large measure dictated by the 'market choices' of the 'education consumer', rather than by the intellectual standards or cultural expectations of the elite as under the enlightenment model. There is even some competition between educational facilities offering similar courses at slightly different levels and at varying costs. And in most cases the cost is quite reasonable, usually sufficiently low to be competitive with other forms of recreation. Thus, with further education (apparently) available to anyone willing to 'purchase' it, the issue of equality of educational opportunity is resolved.[31]

In this regard, Athabasca University operates entirely under the

consumerism model. As mentioned previously, Athabasca University's avowed goal is to "...make university education accessible to, and possible for, any adult Albertan who wants it." The catch, however, is that equality of access to Athabasca University is *not* synonymous with equality of access to higher education. As suggested earlier, a degree from Athabasca University may not be as economically useful, or as socially prestigious, as a degree from one of the other universities. Thus, by apparently resolving the issue through provision of Athabasca University, the government and education elite *have allowed the issue of equality of educational opportunities to be ignored by the conventional universities.*

This is extremely subtle: By holding both the manpower and consumerism models *simultaneously*, the government and/or the education elite can toss the issue of equality of educational opportunity back and forth between the two models and the two types of campuses. Because the major universities are being vocationalized and come under the manpower model, equality of educational opportunity is downplayed since as an output determined system, this is viewed as of secondary importance to correctly matching graduate production to the needs of the economy. But when one objects that equality of educational opportunity is lacking, the response is to point to the open opportunities offered by Athabasca University, and to therefore claim that the *system* is therefore open to anyone who wishes to partake. Thus, the system is seen as operating under the consumerism model for the purposes of discussion of educational opportunities, but under the manpower model for purposes of economic planning, without any awareness of the inherent contradiction.

In reality, equal access, but to *unequal* institutions, does *not* represent equality of educational opportunity.

Still, it must be said that Athabasca University comes *closer* to providing equality of educational opportunity than would the mere provision of an 'open' community college, and quite possibly more than could be provided by another conventional three or four year college. And, of course, it is very considerably better than nothing....

It is interesting to note how this particular meshing of the manpower and consumerism models appeals to pro-capitalist ideology. To the business executive, people fall into one of two categories: either they are workers— in which case the employer wants them appropriately trained, or they are consumers— in which case he would like to sell them something, Thus, the education system has come to see the student as either a worker to be trained or a consumer to be entertained.

It has occasionally been suggested that the expansion of the higher education system under the human capital model represented a public subsidy to the corporations on the grounds that the burden of training the corporation's employees had been divided between the state which invested in universities and technical schools and the individual who invested in his own training.[32] While this trend continues and is expanded even further under the manpower model (which accelerates the vocationalization of higher education), under the consumerism model the individual is starting to undertake his continuing education, not only at his own expense, but on his own time! Thus, ironically, the greatest opportunities afforded by the emergence of part-time higher education delivered through distance education facilities such as Athabasca, may be to the big corporations rather than the individual....

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY MODEL

Mayer Zald's political economy approach proved quite useful as an orienting framework for this thesis.

First, as a middle-range conceptual scheme, it enabled the simultaneous analysis of the internal processes of the university and its relationship with external agencies and forces. Without the detailed analysis of historical forces at work in higher education, both in Canada as a whole and in Alberta specifically, the emergence of Athabasca University would have appeared to have been either an unexplainable anomaly or an example of a trend (namely, the diffusion of the Open University model) which it did *not* represent. On the other hand, a broad theoretical approach focusing on the demographic and ideological forces in Canadian higher education would have been unable to recognize the vital role played by key members of the education elite in the university's successful achievement of a new mandate. Furthermore, by being able to deal with more than one level of analysis, it was possible to cope with the interaction of several important theoretical issues rather than limit the study to just one; that is, it was possible to deal with the changes in the human capital and enlightenment models, *and* the issue of equality of educational opportunity, *and* the role of education elite and governing political parties, *and* the diffusion of educational models such as the Open University, *and* the impact of economic and demographic forces, *and* a historical case study of the emergence of a particular institution.

Second, the political economy model assumes neither consensus nor conflict, thus freeing the researcher to interpret events as either or

both. Thus, for example, it was possible to see the 'ideological tension' between the education elite and the Progressive Conservative cabinet as leading to a compromise in which both groups pursued their own goals while simultaneously satisfying those of the other groups without ever fully recognizing the inherent conflict in their respective positions.

In contrast, structural functional approaches would have tended to downplay the distinctions between the human capital and manpower models, and have assumed a commonality of interest between the education elite, the governing party, and the education consumer. The result would have been an uncritical acceptance of the emergence of Athabasca University as an example of the diffusion of the Open University model and an expansion of educational opportunities in response to the 'determining' demographic factors.

A marxist or conflict approach, on the other hand, would have exaggerated the degree of conflict between the various ideological positions and consequently been unable to reconcile the interpenetration of the four models or accepted the ambiguous nature of the— in some ways— very real expansion of educational opportunities afforded by Athabasca University. Moreover, there tend to be overtones of deliberate conspiracy behind such phenomenon as the alienation of the liberal arts function from the main campus, as opposed to the more realistic interpretation that such things are the unintended and unrecognized consequences of poorly articulated ideological models; that is, that people are often confused by their own rhetoric.

Third, Zald's approach focuses on the "economic and political forces, structures, pressures, and constraints" which initiate, motivate

and shape the direction of change.[33] These were obviously the important elements in the analysis of the emergence of Athabasca University. Instead of focusing on such narrow concepts as 'efficiency' or 'productivity', it provides for an analysis of goal creation, displacement and change, and the other basic 'givens' of an organization. In contrast, both structural functional and marxist theorists tend to take the 'givens' of a situation for granted and proceed with a 'static' analysis of the organization operating within these parameters. In fact, most structural functional analysis of organizational change have tended to be atheoretical and historical. while marxist analysis are often too dependent upon simplistic class analysis and an even more confining dialectical movement.

Unfortunately, the greater flexibility of the political economy model is also its greatest weakness. Zald's model is *so* vague that it tends to fade from sight in a vast cauldron of competing factors, trends, and levels of analysis. Practically anything can be seen as a 'political' or 'economic' factor and sifting out the relevant ones is made more confusing by the simultaneous consideration of several levels of analysis. In the end, one is forced to make the selection of data on the basis of 'common sense', rather than having it dictated by the theoretical constructs of the model.

The usefulness of the political economy model, then, rests with the selection of the secondary theoretical approaches adopted. In this thesis, the major analysis was shaped by the discussion of the human capital model and the issue of equality of educational opportunity, in addition to the straight forward historical analysis of the case study. As suggested previously, the advantage of using Zald's framework

in addition to these secondary models, is that these models themselves can be analyzed and their constructs modified in light of the case study, and their interaction. Without the political economy model to provide some basic (albeit, vague) framework, the researcher relying on these secondary models would be faced with the unsettling prospect of changing the dimensions of his 'ruler' even as he measures.

The political economy model is still too new to be very well defined, but even so it is possible that it will soon begin to replace the aging structural functional approaches, at least in Canada. While there is little real documentation that can be offered for this intuitive opinion, it seems clear that both the American-based structural functionalism and the European-rooted marxist conflict theories have increasingly little to offer the Canadian sociologist whose ideological roots are neither American nor European. Just as the American 'melting pot' raised the construct of 'consensus' to the core of American social science, and the rigid class structures of Europe made for an emphasis on 'conflict' in European social science, the Canadian 'mosaic' must lead to a 'conflict in consensus' (or 'consensus in conflict') model of society; that is of course the political economy model.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER VII

[1]See Chapter VI, pp.

[2]Worth Report, p. 86.

[3]Ibid., p. 87.

[4]Of course, Athabasca University's flexibility and accessibility may also encourage individuals to undertake higher education who might otherwise not have, and thereby *increase* the number of students demanding places at the conventional universities, but this is not really a contradiction. The object is not to eliminate the demand altogether but merely to 'weed out' those deemed 'unsuitable'. Athabasca University can perform this screening function more cheaply than a conventional post-secondary institution.

[5]Or perhaps it was simply a question of the government failing to examine the education elite's motives.

[6]Athabasca University, Academic Concept, pp. 4-5.

[7]Ibid., p. 5.

[8]Athabasca University, 1979/80 Calendar, p. 1.

[9]Ibid., p. 13.

[10]Ibid., p. 3.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Athabasca University has four admission categories: (1) University determined programs (actually, only the Bachelor of Administration program, that is, the main vocational preparation degree, which comes under the manpower model); (2) individualized study degree programs which "proyides a framework within which they [the students] have considerable freedom to choose courses according to their intersts and

needs"; (3) transfer programs, which are set more or less by the other institutions involved; and (4) non-program admission, "which permits the student to take virtually any courses for which they have the prerequisite knowledge". (Ibid., pp. 8-9.)

This is a pretty far cry from the enlightenment model universities which used to set rigid programs of Greek and Latin studies, but other institutions today go even further yet, offering courses on *any* subject provided that enough people express interest to fill the class (usually ten to twelve is enough).

[14] Worth Report, p. 109.

[15] Athabasca University, 1979/80 Calendar, p. 3.

[16] A good example of this is the recent expansion of the Commerce and Business Administration programs at the University of Alberta.

[17] It is interesting to note that the relocation of a university away from the intellectual and cultural resources of the capital would have been unthinkable under the enlightenment model, not only as an encroachment on university autonomy, but also as a detriment to the recruitment of quality staff and accessibility to resources. Under either the manpower or consumerism models, however, a university is viewed as merely a 'factory' producing a marketable product, and its relocation to an economically depressed region makes acceptable economic sense.

[18] Athabasca University, 1979/80 Calendar, p. 1.

[19] It is interesting to note that Athabasca University even accepts payment of tuition fees by Chargex credit card! This not only makes payment as convenient and painless as possible, it is also taking the 'consumerism' approach about as far as one can go....

[20] Ibid., p. 3.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid., p. 28.

[24] Ibid., p. 3

[25] Review, p. 7. (See also, Chapter VI.)

[26]The fact that part-time students are generally older (approximately 75% of Athabasca University's students are 25 years or older [1979/80 Calendar]) means that they are more likely to experience career pressures or family responsibilities than the full-time student, and consequently be forced to temporarily suspend their studies. Whereas, the younger full-time student who drops out generally does so for reasons of motivation, disillusionment, or inability, and consequently does so for good. Or, if he does eventually return to university, it is more likely as a part-time student at Athabasca University than a return to his former college and full-time studies.

[27]For example, Walter Perry, Athabasca University Convocation Ceremonies, 1979. Dr. W.A.S. Smith (former President of Athabasca University) in informal conversation with the author has challenged this "conventional wisdom" and points out that there is very little hard evidence to support the claim that correspondence degrees are more difficult to obtain.

Correspondence institutions may not be able to offer their students the same student-instructor or student-student interactions as the conventional universities, but it is entirely possible that the type of interactions they do offer are as good as— and perhaps even superior to— those of the traditional campus. What strikes one student as the supportive comradery of living in residence, may strike another as a destructive lack of privacy and quiet. While one student may find that correspondence courses require more self-discipline without the set pacing of lecture attendance, another may prefer the self-pacing and flexibility of home-study. Even allowing that a correspondence degree may prove more difficult for many students, it may well be easier for others.

In any event, however, it is probable that the correspondence degree requires a good deal of self-discipline from a student, and that employers may come to value such 'self-starters' equally or to a greater degree than holders of degrees from conventional institutions.

[28]Athabasca University, 1979/80 Calendar, p. 14.

[29]Alberta Advanced Education and Manpower, Athabasca University: A Proposed Role and Mandate, June 1975, p. 2.

[30]A physical analogy man be helpful here: In a period of energy shortage, there will be an attempt to develop all of a nation's oil reserves, no matter how small the potential pool or how difficult the development; but when supplies exceed demand, the need to develop the small pools is removed and only the elephantine pools will be exploited. Similarly, the 'less promising' lower class or minority student will be economically worth developing (through provision of compensatory educational opportunities, for example) only when the demand for trained labour is expected to exceed supply— though the moral obligation, of course, remains in any case.

[31]Of course there is still the question of psychological barriers to further education, the question of access to information concerning educational opportunities, and so on, but these can be dismissed here as outside the jurisdiction of the educator, at least under the "phenomenological" model of educational opportunity. The situation is similar to that of public libraries: The fact that they are more commonly utilized by the middle and upper classes rather than the working or lower classes cannot be attributed to inequalities in accessibility.

[32]David N. Smith, Who Rules The Universities, pp. 139-172. See also, footnote 10, Chapter III.

[33]Zald, p. 231.

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